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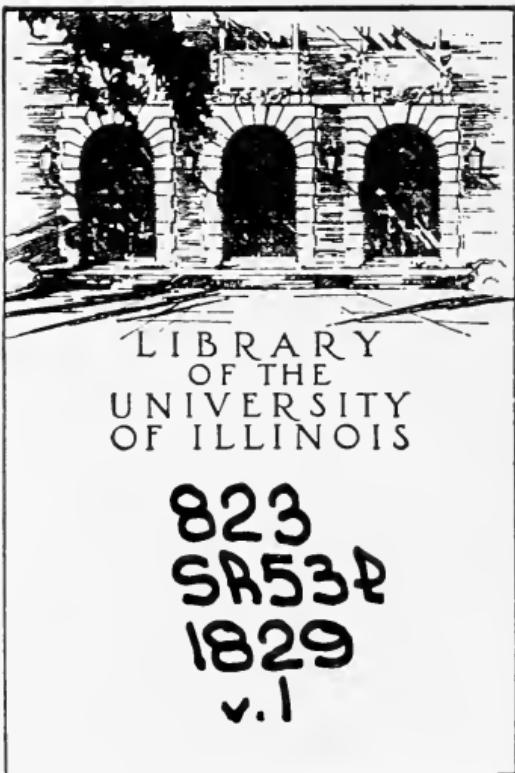
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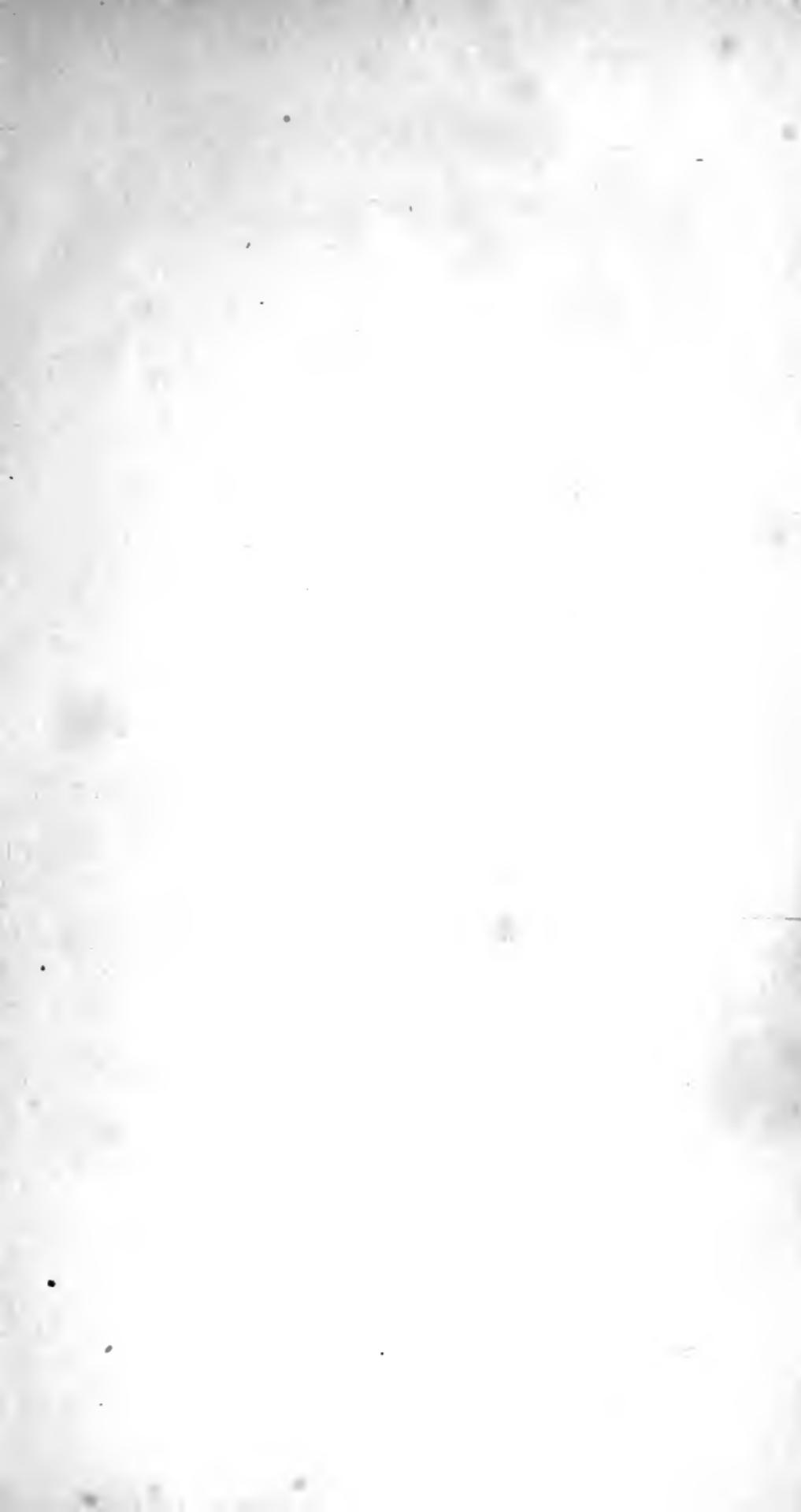
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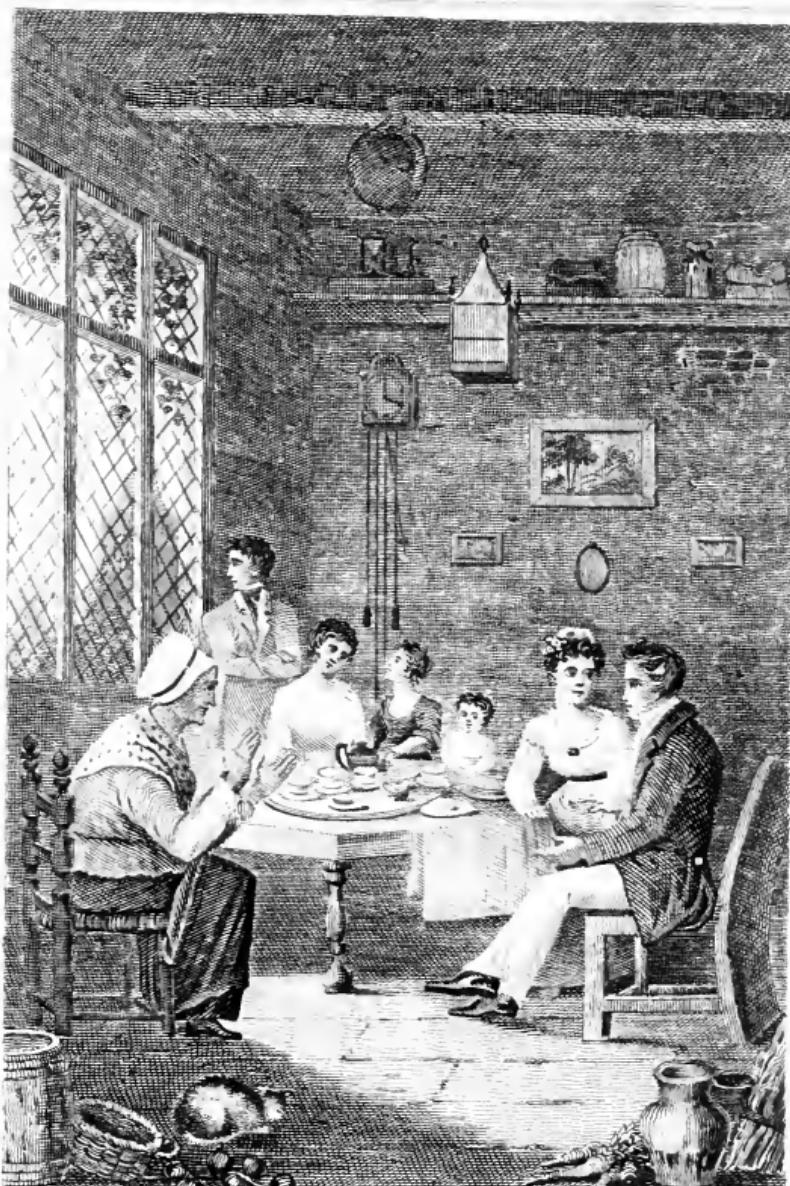








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*Published by F. Hulston & Son, Wellington, Salop, June 1<sup>st</sup> 1823.*

THE  
**Lady of the Manor.**

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BEING  
A SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS  
**ON THE SUBJECT OF CONFIRMATION.**  
*Intended for the Use of the Middle and Higher Ranks  
of  
YOUNG FEMALES.*

BY  
**MRS. SHERWOOD,**

*Author of "LITTLE HENRY AND HIS BEARER,"  
&c. &c.*

**VOLUME I.**

THIRD EDITION.

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THE

# LADY OF THE MANOR,

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## CHAPTER I.

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### *Introductory.*

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IN one of the southern counties of England there is a village beautifully situated within view of the sea, and inhabited chiefly by persons of easy fortune and elegant manners. And as the manor-house was, a few years ago, the chief ornament of this village; so the lady of the manor, at that period, shone eminently and admirably, above all her sex in that part of the country. Since, however, there is much difference of opinion concerning what may justly be called admirable in the female character, some making the fashions of this world, and others the principles of the Christian religion, the test of true excellence; I shall endeavour to give such a description of the lady in question as may enable the careful reader to form a just estimate of her worth.

The lady of the manor was descended from a respectable, though not a noble, family. Her parents were pious, and endeavoured not only to make her acquainted with the word of God, but also to regulate her life agreeably to the revealed will of her heavenly Father. In the education of this lady, literary refinement had been wisely blended with domestic usefulness, and the highest polish of manners and sweetest courtesies of life with

the most simple and moderate habits. She had married early in life. Her husband was a military man, and one whose piety did honour to his profession. With this beloved companion she had visited several foreign countries, and not without improving the opportunities thus afforded her of marking the various customs and manners of mankind. But though highly favoured in her husband, this lady had endured many afflictions: and, after passing through many scenes of sorrow, she was now left a widow, with only two children remaining out of a large and lovely family.

By the death of several intermediate heirs, the husband of the lady of the manor had, some years ago, unexpectedly entered into possession of the manor-house situated in the village above mentioned, together with a considerable estate in the neighbourhood. Thus this excellent lady was introduced into a more exalted situation in society, a circumstance which afforded her opportunity for a larger display of Christian virtues than a humbler sphere of action could have supplied.

It now became evident, that her industry and moderation, her plainness of dress and her humility of carriage, were not the effect of a moderate fortune, but of Christian principles; since all these qualities remained in their original simplicity, even after a change of circumstances appeared, in the eye of the world, to require a change of habits.

But this excellent lady found other objects on which to bestow the superfluities of her purse than those which vanity would have pointed out; and, when called to occupy an elevated station, her courteous manners bore no marks of supercilious condescension, but seemed to flow from the most perfect spirit of Christian meekness.

Though now possessing the means of visiting and being visited with marks of personal distinction, this lady was still observant of the apostle's caution, and was *a keeper at home*; at the same time not forgetting to exercise that kind of hospitality, which we find so earnestly recommended by our Lord in St. Luke xiv. 12—14.—*Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made*

*thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*

When the lady of the manor came into possession of this additional property, she had already arrived at that period of life when women can no longer strictly be called beautiful. But she still retained a graceful person, together with an exceedingly animated and agreeable countenance: and what was peculiarly admirable in every part of her manners and deportment was, that she never seemed to be taken up with herself, a circumstance which preserved her from all those awkwardnesses which continually appear in their carriage who are not able to divest themselves of so unamiable a habit. This absence of every thing like selfish feeling in the lady we describe—and which, in a great measure, pervaded her whole character,—was effected, no doubt, by the secret and powerful influence of that Holy Spirit, whose office it is not only to control our natural evil tempers, but really and truly to regenerate the heart of sinful man. And wonderful was the effect of this freedom from low passions in producing a peculiar dignity, composure, and graciousness of carriage, which seemed to ennable and beautify her whole person.

A few years after her settling in the manor-house, this lady, as I have before intimated, was left a widow; yet not a widow without hope, since she had every well-grounded reason to believe, that, as her lamented partner had long been led to place his trust in the merits of his Redeemer, he was only removed from her to be admitted a little before her into that glory into which she also hoped to be received in due time, through the same blessed Saviour. Her grief therefore for his loss admitted of every alleviation that religion could offer; and she often looked upon his likeness in the military dress which he had worn in the early days of their happy union, with the sweet assurance that he was now arrived in that blessed country where *there remaineth a rest for the people of God.* (Heb. iv. 9.)

For some years after the death of her husband, who left her in full possession of his property during her life, she had been chiefly occupied by the education of her

two sons, for whose instruction she procured a pious and learned tutor; a man advanced in years, together with whom she laboured in the formation of their minds and manners, steadily using the means allowed and appointed by God, and looking in faith for his blessing upon those means.

At the period when those events and conversations took place which I mean particularly to enlarge upon in the life of this lady, the two young gentlemen above mentioned were travelling on the Continent with their venerable preceptor, while she resided alone in the mansion-house.

I date my narrative from a certain Sunday morning early in the spring. A sharp and frosty air, which during the night had covered every branch and every blade of grass with icicles, was now rendered more temperate by the rays of the sun breaking through fleecy clouds.

At this time the coach of the lady of the manor set out from the mansion-house for the church. The village bells were ringing, and groups of cottagers were seen issuing from their respective dwellings, and passing in different directions across the park, towards the church, while better dressed and more genteel persons appeared moving through the village street, as the coach drove along—presenting all together a scene of order and decency particularly suited to that holy day, the numbers still thickening as they approached the iron gates which led into the church-yard.

Thus frequently does the visible church in the present day, and the mixed multitude who form its members, supply the most lively picture which we can conceive of that glorious period, when *the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.* (Isaiah ii. 2.) *And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.* (Isaiah xxxv. 10.)

The public service was performed by a young clergyman, who had lately been presented to the living: a man of true piety, and one who promised, through the divine blessing, to become a successful labourer in the vine-yard of his Lord.

This young man, whose name was Vernon, was much esteemed by the lady of the manor, who particularly admired in him that humble and teachable spirit, which is but too rarely observed (though particularly necessary) about those who are appointed to act as instructors of others. After service, as she was stepping into her carriage, Mr. Vernon came up to the door, and offered his services to accompany her home, observing, that as she had often asked him to dine with her on a Sunday, an honour which he had in general found himself obliged to decline, he would now, if agreeable, avail himself of her friendly offer. She expressed herself as being always glad to see him, and he in consequence took his place in the coach opposite to her.

Mr. Vernon having generally found his Sunday duties quite adequate to the entire employment of that sacred day, had almost invariably declined every Sunday invitation; and as the lady of the manor had always admitted his excuses with approbation, she was now not a little surprised at this voluntary offer of his company. But before the coach was well extricated from the crowd at the church-door, he began to explain the occasion of his present intrusion. He commenced by informing her, that the bishop had given him private notice of his intention to hold a confirmation in the village, at no very distant period. He then proceeded to state, that it was his own most anxious desire, with the divine assistance, to avail himself of this opportunity to call the attention of the younger part of the parish to those solemn truths which had hitherto been evidently too much neglected among them. He then opened to the lady his plans for the effecting of this purpose, and informing her, that he proposed to give lectures on the subject of confirmation immediately after evening-service on the Sunday, and also, during the summer, on every Thursday evening. One part of his plan was, to receive the young men of the parish into his own house, for private examination at certain hours which he should appoint; and another was, to collect the young women of the lower orders for the same purpose, in the house of the village schoolmistress. "But," added he, "there yet remains one description of young persons, whose instruction I consider of infinite importance to society in general; and yet such is my

youth and inexperience, that I should feel a particular awkwardness in conversing with them: in short," continued he, "the thing would be impracticable to me."

"You mean," said the lady of the manor, "I presume, the young females of higher rank in your parish."

"I do," said Mr. Vernon, "and I feel that, if it were even possible for me to overcome my reluctance to such an undertaking, yet that, perhaps, it would be more prudent to decline it; especially," continued he, "if I could procure such a substitute as I desire." Here he paused, and looked at the lady of the manor, who remained silently expecting what he had further to propose.

Mr. Vernon then proceeded to declare his' wishes; which were, if possible, to engage the lady of the manor to undertake this part of his duty for him, and to employ some of her leisure hours, until the period of the confirmation should arrive, in giving religious instruction to the young ladies of the parish.

The lady of the manor was somewhat perplexed by this request. She perceived however at once the propriety of it. She foresaw also, that great good might be thus accomplished, if God should bless the work. But while she was disposed to consider the proposal as a plain call of duty, her unaffected humility inclined her at the same time to hesitate on the ground of her unfitness for such an undertaking—and in this state of indecision she remained a moment silent.

This interval Mr. Vernon employed in urging his request, and using such arguments as he thought most calculated to influence a mind under the regulation of Christian principles. At length, the lady replied, "I ask only a short time for serious consideration, as well as for seeking superior direction, and I will give you my answer this evening."

The remainder of the time which Mr. Vernon spent with the lady of the manor, and which was till evening-service required his attendance, was for the most part employed in conversing upon the nature of confirmation, and enquiring into its origin; for the purpose of ascertaining whether it ought to be considered as an ordinance of Scripture, or merely as a ceremony of man's appointment. Mr. Vernon said, that he had always been led to suppose that the rite was derived from a cer-

tain passage in the Acts of the Apostles, informing us, that after the inhabitants of Samaria had been baptized and had received the word of God, the apostles St. Peter and St. John were sent to lay their hands on these new converts, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.—*Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.* (Acts viii. 14, 15, 17.)

The lady of the manor remarked, that she could not collect from this text any thing relative to confirmation of a nature so decisive as to enable her to say she considered the ordinance of divine appointment, or a duty indispensable to Christians. “We cannot, in short,” said she, “put this ordinance on an equality with Baptism or the Lord’s Supper, neither ought we to condemn those who reject it entirely.”

“I believe,” said Mr. Vernon, “that we may plead the authority of the primitive church in its favour.”

“I require nothing to be said in its favour,” replied the lady of the manor: “I myself approve the custom, and am convinced that it affords a precious opportunity of drawing the attention of the youthful mind to serious subjects at that period of life, when the world from without pours in all its temptations, and finds too many advocates in the evil tendencies of the heart. And I am persuaded that under these views the rulers of the church, in almost every period of its existence, have either adopted this very ceremony of confirmation, or appointed some other observance calculated to answer the same purpose.”

As soon as the lady of the manor had opportunity of being alone after this conversation, she prayed earnestly for the divine direction and assistance in an affair of such importance—and shortly after Mr. Vernon had retired from the sacred services of the day, he was gratified with the following note from her hand.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I FEEL myself entirely unequal to the work which you have appointed me; yet if it is the plea-

sure of the Almighty to employ me on this occasion, I feel so entirely assured of his readiness to fit me for it, that I will not hesitate to cast all my care upon him respecting this matter. If therefore you still continue desirous of my services, I promise you to use my utmost endeavours to promote your wishes."

The note concluded by appointing the place and hour when and where the lady wished to receive the young people; to which she added a request that Mr. Vernon would open the matter to the parents.

Mr. Vernon having carried this special point with the lady of the manor, had no difficulty, either with the young ladies his parishioners, or with their parents, since the lady of the manor was sincerely honoured and beloved by every family in the parish; and the young ladies were quite impatient for the arrival of the appointed day, that should introduce them to the manor-house.

## CHAPTER II.

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*Containing a general Address to Young Persons on the Importance of Confirmation.*

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ON the appointed evening, between twelve and twenty young ladies, all of whom had given in their names as candidates for confirmation, assembled at the manor-house. They were affectionately received by the lady of the manor, who led them into her favourite room, where a large table was set out with preparations for tea; intending, after this refreshment, to enter upon the business which had called them together.

The apartment in which this party were assembled was a library, fitted up with book-cases containing most of the favourite authors of the lady of the manor: it was also her work-room, in which she had neat cabinets, containing materials for work of various kinds, with stores of ready-made garments for the poor. The walls, instead of being hung with looking-glasses and gilt ornaments, were decorated with a few fine old prints, the designs of which were taken from sacred subjects. And at one end of this room were five windows, three of which were in front, and one on each side, descending to the floor, and presenting, from their several aspects, three distinct and very beautiful prospects.

From the front windows was seen a dingle of the park, formed by two considerable eminences, on whose sloping sides were lofty trees combined in picturesque groups. In the depth of this dingle a small stream, that came murmuring from the heights, collected itself into a clear lake, which added not a little to the beauty of the scenery; the prospect terminating with a remote view of the ocean. From the window on the right hand was seen

the ornamented part of the garden and shrubbery ; and on the left, a kind of wilderness of flowering shrubs and aromatic herbs, inclosed with a slight iron railing, in which were many winding walks and garden-seats, inviting to study and contemplation—though both of these views were somewhat artificial, yet neither of them was without its peculiar charms.

The young ladies, while tea was preparing, had leisure to admire this varied scenery, and to observe the last rays of the departing sun, as it disappeared behind the trees. Before the evening closed in, candles being lighted and the hissing urns placed upon the table, the lady of the manor summoned her young visitors to tea, and requesting some of the elder ones to relieve her from the charge of preparing it, she exerted herself to remove that embarrassment which young persons are too apt to exhibit on occasions when they should endeavour to make themselves agreeable. She asked several questions, and made many remarks, with little success : a simple negative or affirmative, with a corresponding grave and formal deportment, was all that she could, for some time, obtain from them. Not, however, quite disheartened by these difficulties, she at length observed something in the countenance of one of the younger ladies, whom we shall call Sophia, of a nature particularly prepossessing. To this young person she then addressed her discourse, and receiving from her a calm and unembarrassed answer, was enabled to support a conversation with her till the ceremony of tea-drinking was over.

During this conversation the young Sophia (for she was one of the youngest of the party) said nothing very brilliant or remarkable. But she spoke with good sense, and without any awkward or affected airs ; being guided by the simple desire of doing or saying what was proper, neither discovering any forwardness, nor seeking to shew herself off to advantage : by which means she succeeded in rendering herself far more agreeable than any of her elders then present. And here, as in many other instances, we see the lovely effects of humility. Humility becomes our fallen nature, and our blessed Saviour himself assumed this garb when he put on the nature of man. For this blessed and holy One, *being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God* ; but

first evening of their meeting, by endeavouring merely to impress them with the wisdom of seizing the present moment for religious improvement, and not putting off repentance to a future time. She then proposed, if agreeable, to repeat a short story which she thought much to the purpose of their present conversation: and the young ladies expressing their satisfaction at this proposal, the lady of the manor accordingly proceeded to relate

*The History of the Lady Caroline ——.*

“ My father,” said the lady of the manor, “ inherited a small estate in the immediate neighbourhood of the superb mansion of the Earl of S——. My father’s property, indeed, was so intermingled with the domains of this nobleman, that it became, like the vineyard of Naboth to the King of Samaria, a matter of great uneasiness to the earl. But, as the house and grounds had been long in our family, my father could not bring his mind to part with them, although he indulged the taste of the Earl in the decorations of his house, and the arrangement of his grounds, in order to render his small dwelling as little of an eye-sore as possible to the nobleman and his visitors.

“ Our house was very old; and, having formed part of an ancient monastery, it was allowed, when repaired by my father, to retain as much of its former character as possible. Many of the gothic windows were filled with stained glass; the grotesque figures of carved wood were still left in their ancient situations over the doors and windows; and the rude crosses were permitted to retain their places on those parts of the roof on which they had been originally fixed. The gardens also were laid out in a style corresponding with the house; and the same taste was consulted in the arrangement of the interior of the dwelling, at least as far as did not interfere with the comfort of its inhabitants.

“ There was a room at the very top of the house, which extended the whole length of the building. This room was in fact only a garret, having a sloping roof, with such windows jutting out from the roof as are frequently seen in old buildings: these, however, were em-

bellished with much grotesque carving, while the higher parts of them were decorated with panes of old painted glass. My father made this room his study, furnishing it with book-shelves and suitable desks, enriching the wall between the book-cases with certain old prints, bronze busts, and figures on pedestals; which, together with such samples of old chairs and tables as he was able to collect, formed an assortment of furniture which might well have suited the abbots and monks who formerly occupied the house.

“ My father was as singularly attached to old books as to old furniture; in consequence of which his venerable book-cases were seldom disgraced by modern works in handsome bindings: and, as he undertook the literary part of my education, he failed not to endeavour to inspire me with the same taste.

“ In this apartment, which I have thus minutely described, I always spent several hours of every day. It was in one of the above-mentioned windows, which projected from the roof, that my chair and desk were placed, and near to it my little shelf of books and work-basket.

“ I had no sister; and my brothers being much older than myself, and for the most part absent from home, either at school or at college, I was from early childhood much accustomed to be alone, and, in consequence, became extremely fond of solitude; although, I am sorry to say, that I did not often employ the opportunities afforded by this solitude to the best purposes. Thus I spent many hours in my little cell, as my father used to call it, sometimes enjoying great happiness there, and at other times enduring as much misery, in proportion as my mind was directed to proper subjects or otherwise. But I have reason to think, that my indulgent parents never suspected the cause of a certain oppression of spirits, which, nevertheless, they must have occasionally observed in me.

“ There are some persons, who can specify the day, and even the hour, in which they first received religious impressions: this however is not my case; since I am unable to remember the time when I had not some sense of the importance of religion, and when my conduct and feelings were not in some degree influenced by it. But

these impressions were extremely different at different times: so that while I recollect certain periods of my youth in which I felt my heart considerably drawn towards heavenly things, I remember also many other seasons in which I was ready to sacrifice every thing to the world.

“ My parents seized the earliest opportunities of giving me Christian instruction; nor did they relax their efforts of this kind, until they were separated from me by death. They also took infinite pains to give me simple Christian habits; at the same time very anxiously setting me the example of all that they wished me to be. My father was a truly pious man, and a laborious parish-priest; while my mother was self-denying, humble, and active in the performance of every Christian duty. Under such parents, it would have been strange, if I had not at least become acquainted with the leading doctrines of Christianity, and acquired some religious habits. But a real change of heart is a divine work, and cannot be effected by the most careful or laborious course of instruction. It is sometimes however very difficult to distinguish in young persons the effect of godly example and a pious education from those effectual workings of the Holy Spirit, by which a vital change is operated in the heart; more especially as, after this change, the natural corruptions still continue to work within, and sometimes with seemingly greater violence than before, being put in motion by that subtle power which worketh in the children of disobedience. On these accounts I cannot undertake to say at what period of my life I was first made really sensible of divine impressions; though, as I before said, I can remember deriving some pleasure from religious pursuits even in my early youth.

“ I was very early taught to find satisfaction in visiting the poor, in working for them, and reading to them. My Bible was represented to me as an inexhaustible source of sweet meditation, affording endless prospects of peace and glory. My father also took great pains in leading me to admire the beautiful works of creation, and to consider them as so many earnests of what the Father of all good has promised to provide for those who love him, in the world to come: so that every tree

and every flower, the murmuring brooks and shady woods, the star-light nights and sunny days, in my young imagination were made to abound with sweet promises and pleasant prospects of everlasting bliss; the door to which was already opened by a dear and suffering Saviour. The effect of these cheering and pious instructions, particularly during the first ten or eleven years of my life, was at times so powerful as to maintain a prevailing influence upon my mind; under which I was accustomed to enjoy so sweet a peace, that my little cell appeared to me no other than a paradise, of which I could truly say, *Lord, it is good for me to be here.* (Matt. xvii. 4.) And thus it will ever be found, in every situation of life—when we live near to God, and conform ourselves in all things to the divine will, we shall be happy: but, whenever our will rises in opposition to the sovereign pleasure of the Almighty, our peace will depart from us.

“ I mentioned before, that my father’s little estate bordered closely upon the domains of the Earl of S——. The two houses were in such near neighbourhood, that when occupying my usual place in my father’s study, which was, as I before described it, in the roof of our house, I could from thence observe any one standing at the door or windows of the mansion-house, distinctly enough to discern in what manner such persons might be employed.

“ There was nothing intervening between the two houses except a little grass-plot in the front of my father’s habitation, a narrow lane or coach-way, and a very small part of the earl’s pleasure-ground. Moreover, exactly opposite to my window there stood an iron gate of slight construction, which formed so considerable an opening among the trees as to leave my view entirely unobstructed.

“ That part of the mansion-house which faced my window was not the grand front of the house, but that which contained some of the more private apartments; and among the rest, those occupied by Lady Caroline, the only daughter of the earl, her governess, and her maid. On this side was also a portico, supporting a large balcony, into which the young lady’s rooms opened, and upon which she often came out, when the

weather would admit, to read, to play upon her harp, or to study her lesson.

“Lady Caroline was a few years older than myself, and, having a fine person, appeared to my young and foolish mind the model of all human perfection; though there was, perhaps, very little in her that was truly admirable: for it has since occurred to me, that her manners, which I then thought so charming, were sometimes haughty, cold, and distant, and at other times superciliously condescending. Self was mingled, or rather predominant in every action; and she perhaps never moved or spoke in public, without studying effect. Neither could any thing better have been expected in the common course of things from this unhappy young lady, whose education was of the most superficial kind, and who was constantly surrounded by flatterers. She was, however, handsome; was possessed of many showy accomplishments; was richly and fashionably clothed; was never addressed but with the utmost respect; rode in a coach; and lived in a superb house—she was, therefore, to me not only an object of admiration, but, at length, of the most vehement envy: which last sinful feeling at times gained so much upon me, as very materially to interrupt my peace. Nevertheless, although I knew this feeling to be wrong, I did not resist it; or, rather, I did not use the means appointed by God for the mortification of it, but allowed it to remain as a thorn in my flesh, to the total destruction of my comfort.

“Whenever the earl’s family were absent from this seat, which often happened, then, by employing my thoughts less about Lady Caroline, I in a great measure recovered my happiness, becoming, as I fancied, content with my humble situation. On her return, however, my supposed humility constantly disappeared: I became dissatisfied with myself and all about me; thinking of little else than this envied object, and even going so far as sometimes to wish I could change places with her.

“Had the Almighty granted my wish,” continued the lady of the manor, “how dreadful to me would have been the consequences of my vain desire! My heavenly Father however dealt not with me according to my deserts; but, while he made me feel my sin, he spared me

the righteous punishment of it. I will now, without speaking so much of myself, proceed with the history of the beautiful and accomplished daughter of the Earl of S—.

“At the age of eighteen, Lady Caroline was taken out of the hands of her governess, and introduced at Court. Her appearance there, we heard, was brilliant, and her success, speaking after the manner of the world, such, that she obtained the heart of a young marquis, who immediately offered her his hand, and was accepted. What the merits of this young nobleman were, I am not authorized to say, but it was determined, for family reasons, that the marriage should not take place until he came of age, of which he then wanted some months.

“While this marriage was in agitation, and the young nobleman in attendance on his bride elect, the family arrived in our neighbourhood, displaying before my eyes all that could be imagined of worldly splendour and worldly happiness; and it may well be supposed, that the view of these things by no means added to my felicity. In the mean time, I was frequently invited to the earl’s house: and though my parents did not desire for me such society as I mixed with there, yet they found it extremely difficult altogether to withhold me from it.

“The Earl of S— had three sons; the youngest of whom, Mr. William, was destined for the Church. This young nobleman, by the especial mercy of God, having been placed at the University under the charge of a pious tutor, was so effectually wrought upon by his instructions as to exhibit, even at that early and dangerous period of life, many very decisive evidences of a renewed heart.

“At the time of which I am speaking, all the sons of the earl were at home; and I more than once witnessed conversations of a very serious tendency between Mr. William and his sister, one of which I particularly remember. I was admitted, one morning, to sit with Lady Caroline, and certain other young ladies of distinction, in the dressing-room of the former. We were engaged with our needles, when Mr. William entered, and, addressing his sister affectionately, asked permission to read to us. Having received this permission, he was hastening to select a book, when she called after him,

and implored him, with assumed earnestness, and an affected shrug of the shoulders, not on any account to bring a religious book. On hearing this, he turned back, and taking a seat by her on the sofa, he spoke with much warmth and tenderness upon the uncertainty of life, and the certainty of death; the reality of eternal punishment, and the appointed way of escaping that punishment. She heard him with impatience, attempting often to interrupt him; till at length, breaking out into a haughty and contemptuous laugh, she uttered certain expressions which but too plainly proved to me that this admired young lady was in fact an infidel, a character, I fear, too common among those who are lovers of pleasure, and devoted to the present world. This was one of the last interviews which I had with Lady Caroline, and it left an impression upon my mind of an exceedingly painful nature.

“ It was soon after this, that the family removed to town, confessedly with the purpose of preparing for the intended marriage. On the morning of their departure, I was sitting at my window, finishing some inglorious task of plain work which required to be speedily concluded, with an old edition of Baxter’s Saint’s Everlasting Rest lying open before me—when the sound of carriages caused me to lift up my head. I perceived a superb phaeton, drawn by four horses, issuing out of the gates of the mansion-house, followed by the earl’s travelling-carriage, the family-coach, and several out-riders. In this phaeton was the young marquis, with Lady Caroline sitting by his side. The young lady was dressed with uncommon elegance, and the white plumes of her riding-hat floating in the air, excited in my unsanctified imagination an idea of the utmost splendour, elegance, and taste. Just catching a view of me, as I stood at my garret-window, she bowed with a condescending smile; and then pointing me out to her companion, I was saluted by him in the same manner. All this took up only one moment; for the trees in an instant concealed every thing from me but the white plumes of Lady Caroline’s hat.

“ I remained at my window till the gay party had passed; then, turning round, and looking upon the mean spot I occupied, the old book open before me, my task of plain work, the old-fashioned furniture, grim busts,

and musty folios, by which I was surrounded—I burst into tears, and sat down to work, considering myself as the most neglected and hopeless of human beings; when, in reality, I had reason to think myself one of the most peculiarly favoured.

“ My mind was so filled with the thoughts of Lady Caroline’s happiness, that, for more than three months from that time, I had no enjoyment of my own home, or friends, or employments. I neglected to struggle against this temptation; I did not seek assistance from above for that purpose; and therefore I had no right to expect I should receive strength proportioned to my day. Notwithstanding I was at length delivered from this snare; not indeed in the least degree by my own endeavours, but entirely through the goodness and mercy of God.

“ In the mean time, injudicious people, such as are to be found in all neighbourhoods, and from whom the best and most careful parents find it difficult to preserve their children, came, from time to time, to my father’s house, bringing reports of what the earl’s family were doing in town: telling of the superb entertainments they gave, the admiration which the marchioness elect excited wherever she appeared, the elegant clothes and jewels which were in preparation for the wedding, and many other matters of the same kind; all of which served to feed the flame of dissatisfaction which burned in my breast. But, as I kept all these feelings carefully to myself, being secretly ashamed of them, my parents did not think of removing me entirely out of the way of this foolish kind of discourse; and finding their own minds unaffected by it, they were probably not aware of the injurious effects it produced upon me.

“ In this manner things went on till towards the end of autumn, when, after expecting every hour to hear of the marriage of Lady Caroline, news was one day brought that she was dangerously ill, having caught cold at a masquerade. Our next information was, that this cold had brought on a violent fever. And, a few days afterwards, I was truly shocked to hear that the beautiful object of my envy and admiration had ceased to breathe.

“ I can give you no idea of my feelings on this affecting occasion; they were mingled emotions of terror, pi-

ty, and amazement. I had never conceived the possibility of such an event as the death of this splendid object of my envy; and I now remembered with anguish the contempt she had expressed for religion, with my still more wicked murmurings against that God who had appointed my lot in a state of holy retirement, under the charge of pious and tender parents.

“ During the interval between the death and the funeral of poor Lady Caroline, I spent much time in my little study, where I poured out my tears without restraint. My parents knew not all that passed in my mind. They thought my grief natural, and not to be blamed: therefore, leaving me to myself, they allowed this awful event to have its full influence upon my mind. And, with God’s blessing, I believe that it was rendered really useful to me; since, from that time, my views of the importance of religion became gradually more solid and operative.

“ At length, the day arrived, when the remains of poor Lady Caroline were to enter the village. The funeral was to take place at the family-seat; and the morning was ushered in by the tolling of the muffled bell. About noon-day, the deep rumbling of wheels announced the approach of the hearse and mourning-coaches. I was at my window, standing on the very spot from whence I had seen Lady Caroline for the last time. In this place I stood, as it were unable to move, till the approaching sound became louder, and I could distinguish through the trees, which were then leafless, the deep black of the hearse, and the white plumes with which it was surrounded. That hearse contained the remains of what I had considered as the perfection of beauty, elegance, and felicity; and now I felt how utterly inadequate beauty, rank, and fashion are, to ensure the happiness of an immortal being! ‘ Oh, Lady Caroline,’ I cried, in the bitterness of my feelings, ‘ had you been the poorest, the most deformed, the most despised creature upon earth, and had yet given evidence of a sacred change of heart; your friends would have had at this moment a consolation, which nothing on earth can now give them.’ And, on this occasion, the cheerless words of the poet recurred to my mind—

“ ‘ How lov’d, how valued once, avails thee not,  
To whom related, or by whom begot;

A heap of dust alone remains of thee,  
'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be.'

" The hearse approached, and the white plumes again waved in the very same place where those had once flourished on the head of Lady Caroline, exciting in my foolish mind such strange ideas of prosperity, elegance, and happiness. I watched the mournful train till it entered the gates of the mansion-house, and, winding round to the chief front, passed out of my view. I then fell on my knees, and thanked God for all those particular circumstances in my situation, which I had hitherto deplored as misfortunes:—viz. my humble birth, my retired situation, my homely dress, the necessity I was under of working hard and living plainly; and, above all, for that greatest of all blessings, a pious education: all which circumstances I was now led to consider as affording such an earnest of the divine favour as I never could be sufficiently thankful for."

Here the lady of the manor paused a moment, and then said, " My dear young friends, may the history of this young lady, who was cut off in the midst of the highest prospects of earthly grandeur, afford you a seasonable lesson, and lead you to *remember your Creator in the days of your youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when you will say, I have no pleasure in them.*" (Eccles. xii. 1.)

The lady of the manor then expatiated somewhat largely upon the misery of those who die without having been previously brought to the knowledge of God in Christ, and experienced a real change of heart.—" My dear young friends," she said, " did you ever consider what your loss would be, should you be so miserable as to lose heaven? I remember," added she, " being formerly much struck with some passages on this subject in my favourite book, Baxter's Saint's Everlasting Rest; and, if you have no objection, I will read those passages to you, sincerely hoping that, with God's blessing, they may be rendered as profitable to you as they were to me.

" The glorious personal perfection which the saints enjoy in heaven forms one distinguishing privilege, of which the ungodly will be for ever deprived. They lose that shining lustre of the body, surpassing the brightness

of the sun at noon-day. Though the bodies of the wicked will be raised more spiritual than they were upon earth, yet that will only make them capable of the more exquisite torments. They would be glad, at that time, if every member were a dead member, that it might not feel the punishment inflicted on it; or if the whole body, as a rotten carcase, might lie undisturbed in the dust. As a still more degrading privation, the ungodly will want that moral perfection which the blessed enjoy, viz. that holy frame of mind, that cheerful readiness to do the will of God, and that perfect rectitude of soul, which do especially characterize their high and holy state. Instead of these, the unregenerate will manifest that perverseness of will, that loathing of good, that love to evil, and that violence of passion, which possessed and actuated them upon earth. It is true, their understandings will be much cleared, by the absence of former temptations, and their experience of the vanity of former delusions: but they will still exhibit the very same dispositions, which once hurried them on to work all iniquity with greediness. In a word, there will be a greater difference between these miserable wretches and a glorified saint, than there is between a loathsome mass of corruption upon earth and the sun shining in the firmament. Moreover, the impenitent will have no comfortable relation to God, nor any communion with him. *As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge*, but said unto him, *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways*; so God will abhor to retain them in his household. Little does the world know what a loss that soul hath, who loses God. What a dungeon now would the earth be, if deprived of the sun! Or what a loathsome carrion would the body become, if separated from the soul! Yet, all these are nothing to the loss of God! As the enjoyment of God is the heaven of the saints, so the loss of God is the hell of the ungodly.'"

The lady then turned to another part of the book, and read these words:—

“ ‘ The principal author of hell-torments is God himself. As it was no less than God whom the sinner had offended, so it is no less than God who will punish him for his offences. He hath prepared those torments for

his enemies. His continued anger will still be there devouring them. The breath of his indignation will kindle their flames. His wrath will be an intolerable burden to their souls. If it were but a *creature* they had to do with, they might better bear it. Woe to him that falls under the strokes of the Almighty ! *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God !*"

The lady of the manor having read these extracts from the Saint's Rest, closed the book, and asked the young ladies if they were willing to join with her in prayer—a proposal with which they all most cheerfully complied.

Her prayer was very simple ; but, as it was particularly adapted to the state of such young persons as are brought by divine grace to see the necessity of renouncing the present world, and entering upon a new course of life, I shall insert it in this place.

*The Prayer of the Lady of the Manor in Behalf of her Young Companions, that it would please God to give them serious Thoughts of Religion.*

" O THOU High and Mighty One, who inhabitest eternity, I do not presume to approach thy presence, trusting in my own merits, or believing myself to be other than one of the most vile and miserable of sinners. But I come unto thee in the name, and through the merits, of that blessed Saviour who gave up his life for the redemption of mankind. Trusting in him, as a Mediator at once willing and able to interfere in my behalf, and ever ready to present my petitions before the throne of the Almighty, I beseech thee, O my God, to have mercy upon these young persons here assembled before thee. As Job interceded for his children, *lest they should have sinned*, (Job i. 5.) so now do I presume to supplicate for these, my young friends, that holy fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom, and that true repentance which is unto life. Impart to them, O Lord, I earnestly pray thee, a deep sense of the importance of eternal things, and the emptiness of all earthly concerns. Make them to know, that *thy day will come as a thief in the night ; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat ; when the earth also, and the works that are therein,*

*shall be burned up* : and influence them to that *holy conversation and godliness* which may prepare them for being *found of thee in peace* at that awful period. (2 Pet. iii. 10, 11, 14.)

“These are no longer in that state of infancy, wherein it could be justly said of them, By reason of their tender age they cannot perform the promises made for them in their baptism. Should they now be surprised by death, they must stand accountable to thee, O Lord, for the things done in the body ; and, if they have not been chosen out from the world, if they have remained strangers to the holy nature and life of thy people, if they have not received that *holiness without which no man shall see the Lord*, (Heb. xii. 14,) if they have not been born again —we know that they cannot enter the kingdom of God. Hearken, therefore, O Lord, unto my prayer, and listen to my humble supplications. Have mercy on this little company, for whom thy Son died : take from them that sinful levity and sensuality of heart, by which all unregenerate persons are separated from thee ; and give them strong and lasting impressions of the danger of offending thee. May the work which they are now about to undertake, even the renewal of their baptismal vow, be executed, not only according to the prescribed form, but in spirit and in truth : for thou art not a God *dwelling in temples made with hands* ; *neither art thou to be worshipped with men’s hands, as though thou couldst need any thing* ; (Acts xvii. 24, 25,) but thou requirest the service of the heart. Assist, therefore, O Lord, and constrain these young persons to give thee their hearts. *Draw them, and they will run after thee. Bring them into thy courts, and they will be glad and rejoice in thee.* (Canticles i. 4.) But, Lord, we know that of themselves they cannot come ; nay, they cannot so much as wish to come. They are by nature as the dry bones of those who are slain with the sword. Send therefore thy Holy Spirit *to breathe upon these slain, that they may live.* (Ezek. xxxvii. 9.) Let thy mercy, O Lord, be magnified upon them, and make them partakers of thy great salvation. Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

“Our Father,” &c.

The lady of the manor having finished her address to the Almighty, informed the young people, that she now judged it time for them to depart to their respective homes. She also exhorted them to be earnest in studying their Bibles, seeking God in prayer, and avoiding worldly pleasures ; adding, that she hoped they should meet again, with the Lord's permission, on the next appointed day : after which, they took their leave, all of them being much pleased with the manner in which they had spent their evening, and some of them, through the divine influence, considerably impressed by certain parts of the conversation which had taken place.

## CHAPTER III.

*Containing a brief View of the leading Doctrines of the Christian Religion, and a Caution against mistaking the outward Form of Religion for the inward and spiritual Grace.*

WHEN the young party met again at the manor-house, they appeared with more cheerful countenances, and with considerably less embarrassment, than on the former occasion. Two of the young party informed the lady of the manor, that they had been studying *Baxter's Saint's Rest* since their last meeting. Others said, that they had been engaged in reading their Bibles. And Miss Sophia added, that she had found out the most delightful place that could be imagined, wherein to sing hymns, and read the Bible, without interruption. "It is, Madam," said this amiable little girl, "the corner of a coppice near my papa's garden, in which I am allowed to walk by myself; and there is a brook which runs murmuring among the trees, and many bees are there."

The lady of the manor smiled with pleasure on the young lady, as she described, with youthful animation, the sweet place of retirement which she had chosen for the indulgence of her meditations; remarking, that she hoped the time would come, when every thicket and every forest, every mountain and every fruitful field, would resound with the praises of the Lord. "For his glory," proceeded the lady of the manor, "shall cover the heavens, and the earth shall be full of his praise." (Hab. iii. 3.)

Thus cheerfully did the party continue to converse, till the tea-equipage was removed; immediately after which, the lady of the manor, taking down the Book of Prayers

of the Church of England from her book-case, and opening to the Order of Confirmation, or laying on of hands upon those that are baptized and come to years of discretion—she asked her youthful audience if they had ever heard the service read? to which, the greater part of them answered, that they had not.

The lady replied, “We will then, my dear young people, begin this evening, by reading as much of this form as will give you an idea of the general tendency of the ordinance to which it relates. Yet, before I begin to read, I must just remark, that confirmation, from its very nature, supposes that the persons who are to be confirmed have been already baptized. But as I shall have occasion at a future time,” continued she, “to speak to you largely on the subject of baptism, I shall here content myself with observing, that there exists in this country, and also in other countries of Europe, a denomination of Christians who do not approve of infant baptism. It is not now necessary to allege what they say in favour of their opinion; I would here merely remark, that there are, and have been, many of the excellent of the earth among this denomination of Christians; and, as the point upon which our Church differs from them is not essential to salvation, we are bound to them, as to other professing Christians, in the bonds of brotherly love, and should be prepared to meet them cordially on all those points in which our sentiments coincide with theirs. But, to leave this matter, and proceed to the more immediate business of the day.

“I will first inform you, my dear young people,” said the lady of the manor, “that the laying on of hands, in which the ceremony of confirmation chiefly consists, is understood in different ways, both in the Old and New Testament.

“In the first place, it is taken for the ordination and consecration of priests and ministers, as well among the Jews as Christians.

“Secondly, it is sometimes used to signify the establishment of magistrates in their various offices.

“But the sense in which laying on of hands is understood in confirmation,” proceeded she, “is clearly pointed out in Acts viii. 17—*They laid their hands on them that were baptized, and they received the Holy Ghost.*

And though," added the lady of the manor, " we do not believe that the inward and spiritual grace of God always and necessarily accompanies or follows the outward ordinances of religion; yet of this we may rest assured, that if we do not rightly profit by the means of grace, it must be wholly owing to our own carelessness and want of faith."

The lady of the manor then took up the Prayer-Book, and began to read as follows.—

" 'Upon the day appointed, all that are to be then confirmed being placed, and standing in order before the bishop, he, or some other minister appointed by him, shall read this preface following :

" ' To the end that Confirmation may be ministered to the more edifying of such as shall receive it, the Church hath thought good to order, that none hereafter shall be confirmed, but such as can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and can also answer to such other questions as in the short Catechism are contained: which order is very convenient to be observed, to the end that children, being now come to years of discretion, and having learned what their godfathers and godmothers promised for them in baptism, they may themselves, with their own mouth and consent, openly before the Church, ratify and confirm the same, and also promise, that, by the grace of God, they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe such things, as they, by their own confession, have assented unto.' "

(*See Order of Confirmation.*)

At the end of this address, the lady closed the Prayer-Book, and spake thus.—" You may see, my dear young people, from what I have just read, that our Church has made what provision it could for the due preparation of the candidates for confirmation, although these pious precautions are but too frequently rendered null and void, through the impiety and carelessness of parents and sponsors."

The lady of the manor then proceeded to point out to the young people, that it was of more consequence for them to consider the great end and purport of this ordinance of confirmation, than to dwell largely upon the particulars of the form itself. " This ordinance," continued she, " is a general call on young people to en-

quire into the state of their souls, and to ask themselves, whether they are actually in such a situation as may afford a reasonable hope of salvation, or whether they are still living in that unrenewed state of mind, which is the sure earnest of everlasting destruction?

“This question—namely, whether they are actually in a state of salvation—is a question no doubt very often proposed,” added the lady of the manor, “by parents and teachers to their children and pupils; but it cannot be satisfactorily answered by any young person who knows not what it is to be in a state of salvation. For certain it is, that no one can form a just judgment on this point, unless he be acquainted with the leading doctrines of our holy religion; for want of which knowledge, many have long wandered in the way of error, supposing that, by a scrupulous attention to the forms prescribed by the peculiar denomination of Christians to which they belong, they are perfectly secure, while the heart and affections have remained in that state of utter deadness towards God, concerning which we are taught, that, while we continue therein, we are children of wrath, and heirs of hell.”

Here the lady of the manor paused; and the young people looked at each other, like persons just waking as it were from a deep sleep, without being able as yet to comprehend by whom or what they were surrounded.

The lady of the manor, perceiving their confusion, proceeded to make this remark.—“Religion,” said she, “is in itself of so pure and spiritual a nature, and has so little reference to that part of us which is corporeal, that it constitutes the chief pleasure and delight of those spiritual beings who inhabit the regions of everlasting bliss, even that innumerable company of angels and archangels, who surround the throne of God, and who *rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* (Rev. iv. 8.) Notwithstanding however the high and spiritual nature of religion,” continued she, “it is necessary, for the purpose of bringing its divine truths and sacred duties down to the level of man’s capacity while he remains in the body, that certain forms of worship should be prescribed in the Visible Church on earth, and that the time and manner of certain ceremonious observances among every denomination of Christians should be fixed and deter-

mined. Now, concerning these outward forms and modes of things, there always will be some difference of opinion among men; and, in proportion as the religion of any denomination or assembly of Christians loses its spirituality, they are invariably disposed to lay an increasing stress upon its outward forms and ordinances, till, at length, a set of superstitious observances and customs is substituted in the place of spiritual worship. And hence," continued the lady, "proceed all those violent contests which we witness among the different sects of Christians in the world, and for which no complete remedy will be found until the spiritual nature of our religion is more thoroughly understood and felt."

In this place, the lady having paused a moment, one of the young people ventured, though modestly, to remark, that such was her own state of ignorance with regard to spiritual subjects in general, that she had no clear view of what was really important, or what was not so, in religion. She had, she said, been brought up as a member of the Church of England, had been a constant attendant with her parents on divine service, and had hitherto been in the habit of supposing every person to be wrong, who differed in any point from the Established Church of this country.

"I am, my dear Miss Emmeline," replied the lady of the manor, "a member of the same Church with yourself. I was brought up in it, and am the daughter of a clergyman. But I do not continue in this Church from either of these reasons, but because I believe its articles and liturgy are agreeable to Scripture. At the same time, I plainly see that there are many lesser points in which other denominations of Christians may think differently from us, and yet be members of that Universal Church, of which, we trust, we form a part, and of which Christ himself is the head. But," added she, "I could not have thus made up my mind upon this subject, had I not been enabled (I trust by the teaching of the Holy Spirit) to discern what is essential to religion, and what is not; and to understand, that there are certain fundamental doctrines, which cannot be rejected without rejecting Christ himself—which doctrines are wholly independent of the external forms and modes of divine worship."

The lady of the manor then proceeded to draw out a

simple statement of the leading doctrines of the Christian religion, requesting the most serious attention of her young auditors.

“ We are called upon as Christians,” said the lady of the manor, “ to believe that there is one God, eternal, omnipotent, and omnipresent ; and that in this one God there are three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—whose Godhead is one, whose glory is equal, and whose majesty is co-eternal. By this one God were all things made, both visible and invisible, and in him do all things subsist—*for in him we live, and move, and have our being.* We are also taught to believe, that every thing which was created came perfect, and free from sin, out of the hands of the Creator. Nevertheless, we are informed, that some of the angels of God (by what means we cannot tell) did actually fall from their first estate ; and that, becoming the enemies of God in consequence of that fall, they have thenceforth sought to introduce ruin and disorder into all the works of the Almighty. These are the evil spirits of whom we read so frequently in Scripture. These are they, who, by their satanic arts, have brought sin and death into the world ; and, having separated man, by transgression, from his Creator, have thus fitted him for becoming the inhabitant of hell, and the companion of devils. But this malice of Satan and his angels,” proceeded she, “ by which they hoped to obtain a mighty victory over the Lord of Glory, has, instead of furnishing them with a triumph, afforded an occasion of bringing forward the character of the Godhead in such a new and ravishing point of view, as will supply subjects of thanksgiving and praise to all the redeemed tribes of mankind, and all the glorious hosts of heaven, through the never-ending ages of eternity.

“ Before the foundation of the world,” continued she, “ *before the mountains were settled, before the hills were brought forth, while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world,* (Prov. viii. 25, 26,) the Lord Jehovah, the glorious Three in One, established that mighty scheme of salvation, ‘ by which he decreed by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he chose in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ unto everlasting salvation as vessels made to honour.’ (*Articles*

*of the Church.)* These chosen ones of the human race are described in Scripture," added the lady, "to be as numerous as the *stars of heaven, and as the sand of the sea*: they are elsewhere spoken of, as *being clad in robes made white with the blood of the Lamb, and clothed with the righteousness of Christ*; whence we are taught to understand somewhat concerning the method of their salvation, the procuring cause of which is not their own works or deservings, but the imputed merits of the Saviour.

"Furthermore, we learn from Scripture," continued the lady of the manor, "the different parts which the several Persons of the Trinity have chosen to themselves, in the glorious work of man's salvation: and though I hope to discuss these subjects more at large with you, my young friends, at some future time, yet I feel it necessary in this place to touch slightly upon them.

"And first, I would wish you to be strongly impressed with this sweet and consoling thought—that each Person of the glorious Trinity is equally interested and engaged in the salvation of the redeemed; and that, although they have appropriated unto themselves different offices and distinct parts in this divine work, yet, as acting with one mind and will, they are all inseparably united in one and the same glorious undertaking. First, God the Father loved his people, before they knew how to choose the good from the evil, and appointed his Son to die for them, before the foundation of the world. Therefore the redeemed of the Lord are drawn out in love towards him, because he first loved them. Secondly, God the Son freely gave himself up to be the propitiation for our sins. Lastly, God the Holy Ghost fits the redeemed for the glory prepared for them, by carrying on in their hearts the twofold work of regeneration and sanctification; the first of which is instantaneously effected, while the latter is commonly progressive.

"And now," proceeded the lady of the manor, "having given you a short view of these important doctrines, I will endeavour to assist you in examining the state of your souls, with reference to these fundamental points. Have your hearts ever been drawn out in love and gratitude towards your heavenly Father? Have you a becoming sense of his wonderful mercy? And are you aware of the depth, the blackness, and the unpardonable nature

of that guilt, which required for its obliteration such an inconceivable degree of love in your heavenly Father? Are you sensible of the worth of that all-sufficient sacrifice, which the Redeemer offered on your account? And are you willing to take up your cross and follow him? Finally, have you perceived within yourselves any tokens of that divine influence, by which the Holy Spirit operates upon the hearts of the righteous? Are your affections renewed or changed? Do you hate sin? and do you loathe and disallow the evil which your corrupt nature too often leads you to commit?"

The lady of the manor here paused a moment; and, the young people remaining silent, she added, "I do not mean, my dear young friends, to induce you to make your confession to me; but I would fain lead you to search and try yourselves, to enter into the secrets of your own hearts, and to begin, with the divine assistance, that most salutary work of self-examination which is now especially necessary before you take upon you your baptismal vow."

The lady of the manor then, taking up a small manuscript which had lain before her on the table, requested the young ladies to listen to a story, "which," said she, "I consider as being particularly applicable to some parts of our discourse this evening."

### *The History of Louisa Harley.*

Louisa Harley was descended from the younger branch of a noble family. Her parents died while she was yet a mere infant, and she was consigned at the same time to the charge of a great aunt, who was also her godmother.

This lady, whose name was Staunton, was a widow; and, being in possession of a considerable jointure, she was enabled to make a somewhat splendid appearance in the little town of D——, in which she resided. And though she associated freely with all her neighbours, yet her house was distinguished, above all others in the town, by the handsome iron gates which opened into the paved court before her door; while her establishment was not less distinguished by the rich liveries of her footmen.

Mrs. Staunton had been a widow for many years; and ever since the period of her widowhood, her mornings

had been almost invariably devoted, excepting for a few months in the summer, to an attendance at the church service, and her evenings as regularly occupied by cards; for which last purpose, she met some or other of her neighbours every afternoon, and remained with them till between nine and ten o'clock at night. While thus engaged, this lady had grown old without acquiring any new ideas, and, in consequence, from the very force of habit, becoming more and more bigoted to her old ones. She had always been in the habit of praying in a building with a steeple at one end of it, in hearing the lessons read by a person in a surplice, and the sermon preached by one in a different garb; and, from this custom, she had learned to attach such amazing importance to these unessential minutiae, that it would have been infinitely easier to have argued her out of her belief of the divinity of her Saviour, than to have convinced her that a building might afford every necessary convenience for divine service, though it had neither a steeple nor bells.

As soon as Louisa Harley was intrusted to the care of this lady, she was sent to one of the most eminent boarding-schools which the neighbourhood at that time supplied; where she remained till she had entered her seventeenth year; at which time she was brought home, and became an inmate of Mrs. Staunton's house.

The acquirements which this young lady brought with her from school were far from extraordinary, although she had profited as much by the very inferior instruction which she had received as could have been reasonably expected. But had she been favoured with a well-directed education, there are perhaps few young people who would have done more honour to her instructors than Louisa Harley, who was formed by nature to excel most of her sex in bodily and mental perfections—having a tall and graceful person, a fine countenance, a blooming complexion, together with a profusion of glossy auburn hair; her mind being powerful, her imagination lively, and her feelings such as, if properly cultivated, promised to render her the ornament of her family. Unhappily, however, this fine young creature had no director to whom she could look up with sufficient confidence; and, in consequence, on being admitted as the constant inmate of Mrs. Staunton's house, where she was daily condemned

to hear the dull and common-place conversation of the very ordinary characters with whom her aunt associated, she not only became restless and dissatisfied, but, influenced by the usual vivacity of youth, together with the peculiar energy of her own character, she began to plan for herself modes of action, by which she hoped to obtain the happiness she naturally desired. Her first effort was to disencumber herself of those formal religious observances in which her aunt endeavoured to engage her, especially the daily attendance at morning-service; for having no knowledge or feeling of religion, she found nothing in the world so wearisome as sitting for an hour at a time in an almost empty church, while an old clergyman, who was nearly blind, deliberately drawled over the public prayers. She therefore contrived to excuse herself from day to day from this observance, and that with so much art and perseverance, that her aunt at length gave up the point; not omitting however at the same time to remark, though with a coldness which entirely prevented the remark from having the smallest influence, that Louisa was, like almost all other young people, a contemner of religion, and consequently in a state of reprobation.

As Mrs. Staunton regularly attended prayers at half after ten, and from the church went immediately to pay morning-visits till dinner-time, Louisa, by procuring the fore-mentioned exemption, obtained also the whole of the morning to herself; which liberty she did not fail to use in such a way as might be expected—in calling on her young acquaintance in the town, sauntering with them through the streets, or accompanying them to the public walks; a custom, by which she acquired such a habit of dissipation, as speedily rendered her not less dissatisfied with her aunt's dull evening parties round the whist-table, than she had been with her daily attendance at church. And, as the downward road is always smooth and easy, she failed not to proceed very rapidly to further and more open acts of rebellion against her aunt. She began to form evening as well as morning parties for herself, among her young companions; till, at length, the greater part of her time was spent in one continued round of that kind of petty dissipation, which most country towns can hold out to those who are not very nice

in their company. For example: she would engage herself to a commerce-table one evening; to a young party for a game of blind-man's-buff another evening; to see a play in a barn on a third; and to a little dance on a fourth. Thus, weeks and months went round; and though her aunt sometimes complained, and sometimes expostulated, yet Louisa generally contrived to obtain her acquiescence in these imprudences, by representations to this purpose.—“Why, aunt, you know I cannot play at whist; nor can I sit evening after evening with those dull old ladies, of whom you are so very fond; and there is always the best company where I go. Mrs. Dalrymple, the surgeon's lady, will be there to-night; and she has promised to take care of me, and to bring me home; and she will never lose sight of me, nor allow me I am sure to do any thing improper for the whole world.” Now Mrs. Staunton was a lover of ease; and it is always more easy to give way to wilful young people than to contend with them. In consequence of this, Louisa always obtained her desires on these occasions of dispute, although Mrs. Staunton seemed to be not wholly satisfied that she was acting right in submitting to her niece; for Miss Louisa Harley being the great granddaughter of an earl, Mrs. Staunton suspected that the persons with whom she permitted her to associate were not of a very suitable description for introducing her niece into life.

Things were in this state, and Miss Louisa Harley in a very fair way of entirely losing her reputation through this want of decision in the conduct of her aunt, when the rector of the parish, whom I have before described as a very old man, being removed by death, the rectory, which was a valuable one, was presented to a relation of Miss Harley's, a gentleman of the name of Holloway, a married man, and one who had a numerous and respectable family. Immediately upon this gentleman's obtaining the benefice, the large and venerable parsonage-house, with its extensive gardens, were put into admirable order; so that, within a few months, the new incumbent and his family had fixed themselves in their new situation.

On the ground of their relationship and former acquaintance, Mrs. Staunton and Miss Harley paid their first visit to Mrs. Holloway before she had made her appear-

ance at church, and, in consequence, before the rest of the neighbours considered themselves authorized to pay their compliments at the parsonage. But, early as this visit was made after the arrival of the family, it was not before the report of Mrs. Staunton's improper indulgence of Louisa Harley's indiscretion had reached the ears of Mrs. Holloway; and, in consequence, although this lady did not refuse to see her cousins when their names were announced, there was a formality and coldness in the reception she gave them, which very sensibly affected the heart of Louisa, of whom I have before remarked, that she was endued with a remarkable strength and quickness of feeling.

Mrs. Holloway and her daughters were sitting at work in a large old-fashioned parlour, when Louisa and her aunt were introduced; and though the young ladies arose when they entered, they did not advance one step from their seats to meet their cousin, nor were their countenances (which at no time were particularly gracious or animated) illuminated by the smallest tendency towards a smile. The occasion of all this solemnity of manner was, however, at length explained by Mrs. Holloway, who, after several short coughs and expressive hems, opened the subject which dwelt upon her mind, and, though in a sufficiently genteel and obliging way, repeated what she had heard of the imprudence of Miss Harley's conduct, and the injudicious indulgence allowed her by her aunt: adding, at the same time, her own opinion respecting the impropriety of allowing such liberties to young ladies of family; and remarking, that it would be utterly out of her power, and that of Doctor Holloway, to permit their daughters to associate with their cousin, unless she submitted to such restrictions as her birth and rank in life required.

During this explanation and remonstrance, Louisa endured the most violent emotions of shame and vexation; for a conviction of the propriety of all that Mrs. Holloway said, flashed instantly on her mind: as soon therefore as the lady ceased to speak, she looked imploringly on her aunt, hoping that she would say something which might make her behaviour appear in a more favourable point of view. But poor Louisa was disappointed in this hope. Mrs. Staunton without any

hesitation threw all the blame upon her niece, representing her as wholly unmanageable, and describing herself as having used every means to inspire her with a juster sense of propriety.

This assertion of Mrs. Staunton, which was but partially true, removing every part of the blame from herself to her niece, Mrs. Holloway took occasion to represent to Louisa, in the strongest terms, the great offence of disobedience to elders, together with the shame and disgrace which almost inevitably follow this sin. Mrs. Holloway's remarks, though harsh, were strictly true, and in no other view to be condemned but because not altogether directed as the circumstances of the case required. She had not recollect ed, that Louisa was an orphan; that Mrs. Staunton had probably mismanaged her education; and that, perhaps, she might have effected the laudable purpose at which she aimed, in a way less likely to give offence. But this lady, though a well-meaning woman, was one of those severe characters who pay no regard to the feelings of others; and, having always lived in situations which exposed her but little either to the rubs of fortune or the allurements of pleasure, she could make no allowance for those who had failed in their duty through the pressure of the one or the enticements of the other.

With respect to religion, Mrs. Holloway had none which could be properly called Christian; for, although she was a strict observer of forms, she was utterly unacquainted with the real nature and tendency of the doctrines of the Gospel. But, as I shall have occasion hereafter to speak further concerning the religious principles of this family, I will here leave this matter for the present, and proceed with my story.

Mrs. Holloway having relieved her mind of the burden which was upon it relative to the misconduct of her young cousin, and believing that the blame of all which had been amiss lay at the door of Louisa, immediately changed her manner towards Mrs. Staunton, and began to treat her with as much freedom and courtesy as she generally used to any one, still retaining her reserve towards Louisa—although, when she asked Mrs. Staunton to partake of their family dinner, she condescended to extend the invitation to Louisa; at the same time in-

forming her eldest daughter, that she depended on her to amuse Miss Harley.

Miss Holloway, who was some years older than Louisa, was remarkably cold and formal. It was therefore no great relief to Louisa to be obliged to follow this young lady, during the remainder of the morning, up and down stairs; first, into her own apartments, where she was condemned to look over a large folio of stiff drawings; and, afterwards, into a garden equally unentertaining, where they wasted the weary hours till called to dinner—after which, Louisa was obliged to listen to as many comments on her conduct from her cousin, the father of the family, as she had heard in the morning from his wife. And as neither the one nor the other made any allowance for her youth, her inexperience, or her want of a proper guide, nor yet pointed out the means of her acquiring that self-command, which, nevertheless, they insisted upon as that which could not be dispensed with, if she wished in future to be received as a relation in their family—it was no wonder that she returned home in the evening much perplexed and distressed, and suffering under such a dejection of spirits as she had never felt before.

It is probable, however, that these painful impressions might soon have worn off from the mind of Louisa, had it not so happened, that the very next week was fixed for Mrs. Staunton's annual visit into the country: for this lady had always made a point of spending the three summer months of every year in the country. It sometimes happened on these occasions, that she visited a friend's house, and at other times took lodgings in a farm-house. This present year, the farm-house was selected as the most convenient place; and she removed, with her niece, her maid, and footman, to the lodgings which had been prepared for her, a very few days after her visit to Mr. Holloway's.

Had Louisa been in good spirits, she would have fancied a thousand agreeablenesses in this change of place, and have interested herself in all the rural transactions which were carried on in her new situation. But she had not yet forgotten the reproofs given her by her cousins; and perceiving them all to be just, she was oppressed with so deep a sense of shame as nothing could enable her to

shake off; neither could she become in any degree reconciled to herself.

While her mind was in this state, several old-fashioned religious books, which were lying in the window of the parlour at the farm-house, drew her attention. These were, Law's Serious Call, Nelson's Fasts and Festivals, The Ladies' Calling, Fordyce's Sermons for Young Women, and other books of the same complexion, in which the forms and duties of religion are set forth more plainly than its doctrines. These she first took up for want of other occupation, and presently became so much engaged by them, as to feel an eager desire excited in her heart to regulate her future conduct by the strict rules laid down by their authors. "I have lost my character," she said to herself, "in the eyes of my relations, and I will endeavour to retrieve it. I will, on my return to D —, exhibit such an example of strict attention to religion, discretion, and propriety, as shall utterly obliterate my past follies from the mind of Mrs. Holloway and her daughters. I have found (young as I am) nothing but shame and mortification in the ways of pleasure: I will now seek happiness in those of religion. I will repent, and become pious. I will dress after the manner of the excellent Miranda in Law's Serious Call; and I will bestow all I can spare on the poor."

By the time Louisa had formed all these good resolutions, she was, in her own opinion, truly converted, and changed (if such a term may be allowed) into an accomplished saint. Moreover, even during her short residence in the country, she multiplied her observances and forms of devotion, until she became actually perplexed and distressed with the self-imposed burden. In the mean time, the three months which were destined for the country passed away, and Mrs. Staunton and her niece returned to the town.

When these ladies arrived from the country, they found but little change among their old neighbours, excepting that Dr. Holloway's family were become better known, and had, in consequence of the handsome manner in which they lived, and the neat and elegant entertainments which they gave, acquired an influence in society, which tended in some degree to reform the style of manners in the town. Although Dr. Holloway himself never joined in cards or

dancing, yet he permitted both to his family, and even insisted that his lady and the young people should attend the public assemblies, in order to act as a check, by their presence, on any indecorums which might otherwise take place. At the same time, he insisted, that they should also be extremely observant of all the forms of religion, and on no common occasion absent themselves from public worship.

In consequence of this mode of conduct, Dr. Holloway was become a great favourite in the parish, and was held up as a pattern of all that was proper in a parish-priest: for the views of people at that time were not so clear on many subjects as they now are. Mrs. Holloway and her daughters were also considered as bright examples of Christian piety, on account of their occasional charities, and scrupulous observance of the exterior forms of religion; although they were as completely in the world as it was possible for people to be.

This being the case, it was not thought singular, when the bishop of the diocese gave notice of his intention to hold a confirmation in the doctor's parish, that the same gentleman, who but lately had been giving his sanction to public amusements of the most worldly kind, should now exhort the youth of his flock to a serious preparation for confirmation—pressing upon them, from the pulpit, the duty of repentance; and expatiating, at the same time, with apparent earnestness, on the importance of the baptismal vow which they were about to take upon themselves by the solemn rite of confirmation. Such as did not understand the spiritual nature of religion could not be supposed competent to form a just judgment of these inconsistencies in the character of their pastor. They therefore took all his exhortations in good part; while the parents and teachers pressed upon their children and pupils a more close observance of forms of worship, to which partial change in their conduct they gave the name of repentance: thus heaping error upon error, and setting up self-righteousness in the place of humility.

It was just at this crisis, and when this work of self-deception was at its height, that Miss Harley and her aunt returned to their winter residence; where Louisa now found much cause of exultation, in the persuasion of her having already carried to what she imagined a con-

siderable degree of perfection that work of repentance and amendment of life, which her young companions were just about to commence. For this young lady, finding herself able to talk fluently upon the forms of religion, and in a capacity to observe, in some degree, the duties of self-denial and alms-giving, as well as certain stated seasons of prayer and reading, she believed herself not only fit for confirmation, but for heaven itself; it never once occurring to her that more than this was necessary in order to render the sinner meet for acceptance with God.

This apparent change in Louisa's character was soon observed by her neighbours, and presently obtained the approbation of Dr. and Mrs. Holloway—although they, after awhile, deducted a little from their praises of their young cousin, upon finding that, with the enthusiasm natural to her constitution, she had begun to carry her religious observances and works of charity to a degree which threatened to throw their own more discreet and cautious proceedings into the shade. For whereas Dr. and Mrs. Holloway made it their continual object to unite the world and their religion together, Louisa, in the height of her zeal, cast the world from her in disdain, rejected all public amusements, and threw aside her showy ornaments, seeming resolved, by her laborious attentions to the poor, and her strict observance of every religious duty, to seize upon heaven by violence.

For some weeks before confirmation, and for many months afterwards, she refused to enter into company, was seen duly at church on every occasion of public worship, and dressed with the utmost attention to economy, in order to have the more to devote to the schools she patronized, and to the poor widows whom she assisted.

It is proper here to remark, that many who have afterwards been brought into a real and happy acquaintance with God, have, like the young lady in question, previously endeavoured to secure their salvation by their own exertions; though it must, at the same time, be carefully noted, that the true work of conversion never begins until the sinner is brought to cast away his own righteousness, and to seek that of the Saviour. But we shall have occasion hereafter to point out that God the Spirit is the Author of man's regeneration and sanctification, and that

these sacred operations invariably commence in divesting the sinner of self-confidence, and directing him wholly to Christ.

As yet however there were no marks of such a change having taken place in the views or feelings of Louisa Harley. Her confidence in herself was never higher than after she had become more strictly observant of external duties. And although she knew the name of Christ, and was become better acquainted than formerly with the letter of the Scripture ; yet the Spirit had never revealed the Lord Jesus to her as a Saviour, without whose assistance she must utterly perish. Her religion, therefore, was as yet nothing more than a form without life, nor her profession any thing better than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.—But to proceed with our story.

The confirmation above spoken of took place at the time appointed ; and from that period, for more than a year and a half, Louisa Harley maintained so fair a profession, that she was pointed out by many as an example of all that was excellent in the female character : while the modest simplicity of her dress, the smiling and sparkling beauty of her countenance, together with her uncommonly elegant and graceful person, tended not a little to raise her in the general opinion.

In the mean time things were so ordered, that Louisa was assailed by none of those powerful temptations which usually serve to open the eyes of young professors to the deficiency of their own strength. Her lively and active spirit was much engaged in a round of charitable works : and it so happened, that, although much admired by those of the other sex who had any knowledge of her, yet no one in the town had hitherto appeared of sufficient consequence to attract her attention. And thus, though inwardly conscious that she was seldom seen without being admired, the vanity which this admiration excited had not been stimulating enough to discompose or derange her usually calm and graceful deportment, or even on any occasion to excite her spirits above their ordinary pitch. In this manner she for a while maintained her serene and even course, as little aware of the hidden evil lurking within, as the child who lays his hand on the cockatrice' den.

At this period, the little town in which Louisa dwelt

was suddenly thrown into some degree of agitation, by the arrival of a party of foot-soldiers ; and this accession of the gay and the giddy became a signal for the revival of those public amusements, which had lately considerably languished. Louisa was now again solicited to join the fashionable parties of the place: but it required something more than the solicitations of her former companions, or the flattering reports which they gave her of their agreeable meetings, to tempt her to relinquish that on which she had so long prided herself, and upon which she had even built her views of future happiness, namely, her renunciation of public amusements. She therefore held back, and was, in consequence, much more respected by the strangers then sojourning in the town, than those females who pressed confidently upon their notice.

‘ Among the gentlemen who composed the officers of this corps were two of whom I shall have some occasion to speak in the course of my narrative. One of these was a Captain Vivian, a genteel and agreeable young man, and one who passed well in the world, being a person of family and of some fortune, though otherwise an ordinary character. The other, whom we shall describe more largely, was a lieutenant, by name Cecil Gray, the son of a lady of quality, who had married a respectable gentleman, and early become a widow. This young man had not a large fortune; but he possessed many qualities, in comparison with which the gifts of fortune, or even the exterior charms of person and manner, are only as dust in the balance. Cecil Gray was decidedly pious, and had been so from his childhood; and, even in the unpromising situation of a military man, he was enabled to preserve that rare and beautiful consistency of character, which they only possess who walk in the strength of Him with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning.

After having said thus much of this young man, it would be but a poor finishing to the picture to add, that his manners were not merely courteous, but highly polished, and his exterior strikingly handsome, did not these very circumstances afford an opportunity of shewing the strength of that grace by which he was enabled to resist the allurements of vanity, and to retain his

Christian simplicity in a situation of more than ordinary exposure to the flatteries of the world. This young man did not arrive at D—— till his brother officers, by a residence of some weeks had made themselves acquainted with the physiognomies of most of those who were worthy of regard in the town; and it happened, that the very day after his arrival, as he was passing through an obscure street in the suburbs, with Captain Vivian, he saw Louisa Harley for the first time, who was walking simply dressed, and with a basket in her hand, among the shabby houses of the poor.

Captain Vivian having stopped to speak with a private soldier under an old gateway, Cecil Gray, who was thus left unoccupied, had opportunity of marking the young lady, as she passed from one house to another; till having at length accomplished her business, and turning towards home, she approached the gateway which lay in her road.

There was a remarkable ease and dignity, as I have before said, in Louisa Harley's manner, and a sweetness of countenance which could scarcely escape the eye of a discerning observer. As soon as she had passed by, and was not yet out of hearing, Cecil Gray enquired of his companion her name, remarking that he had seldom seen so fine a face, or a deportment more modest and graceful.

It is not necessary to repeat Captain Vivian's reply; it being more to our purpose to describe the effect of Cecil Gray's remark upon the mind of Louisa, who had distinctly heard all he said, though it was not intended that she should. The praise bestowed on her by this elegant stranger was not without its effect: and she returned home in such a state of elation, that when her aunt put into her hand a card of invitation to spend the next evening at Dr. Holloway's, she resolved to go, although a few lines at the end of the formal card, added by Miss Holloway, suggested the idea that a little dance was intended, as several of the military were expected.

Thus passed away all the good resolutions of Louisa Harley, and thus she cancelled with little effort all those shining merits upon which she had grounded so much confidence; and all with the hope of again beholding the young stranger upon whom her appearance had made

so favourable an impression—manifestly proving that she had acted throughout like the man who built his house on the sand, and whose work being without foundation, fell with the first blast of wind that assailed it.

I will not say that Louisa Harley had not some unpleasant feelings while taking out her long neglected ornaments in order to decorate herself, as she supposed, to the best advantage for the evening party. But it may easily be supposed, that these feelings partook more of the nature of shame, and the fear of being charged with inconsistency, after her many and vehement professions of renouncing the world, than of any thing like real regret; since any degree of sincere regret would have led her to reject the forbidden pleasure, before she had tasted of its poisonous sweets.—But I leave these reflections, and proceed to give an account of the entertainment at Dr. Holloway's.

When Mrs. Staunton and Louisa were ushered into the spacious drawing-room at the rectory, they found it filled with a large assembly of young and old persons, among whom however Louisa could see none but the gentleman whose voice she had heard speaking in her praise under the archway. And she was not sorry, on being led to a chair, to find herself seated close by this gentleman and his companion Captain Vivian, both of whom soon found means to be introduced to her.

Louisa Harley had naturally much penetration into character; but this evening, being blinded by vanity, and agitated by various feelings, she did not distinguish the different manners of the two gentlemen, who kept by her side from her first entering the room; neither did she remark that Mr. Cecil Gray did not join in the common rattle with which Captain Vivian entertained her.

When tea was concluded, and the company began to move in order to dance, Louisa's heart began to beat. She had made a frequent and strong outcry against dancing, even in the presence of many then in the room: yet she now very much wished to dance, and hoped that Mr. Gray would select her as a partner—but she was disappointed. Captain Vivian asked her, and, after a moment's hesitation, she rose up with him. And now, what with the exhilarating effect of the music, and the eagerness which many shewed to obtain her hand, together with

the compliments, direct and indirect, which she received from others, Louisa Harley's spirits were exceedingly elevated, especially as she hoped that Mr. Gray would request to dance with her when she had performed her present engagement—but she was again mistaken. When the party, after two dances, sat down to rest, she looked round, and not seeing Mr. Gray in the room, she complained of heat, refused to dance any more, and stole into another room where her aunt and certain other old ladies were set down to whist. Thither she was followed by Captain Vivian, and there, placing herself in a small settee near a bow window which opened into the garden, she remained listening to the trifling discourse of that gentleman, till Mr. Cecil Gray, who had been walking in the garden, came up to the window, and addressing himself to Louisa, would have engaged her in conversation of a somewhat more rational kind than that with which his brother officer was endeavouring to amuse her, had not her own exuberance of spirits converted all he said, if not into folly, into something very far from sense; vanity still blinding her to the real character and taste of the young man with whom she conversed.

It is the opinion of many, that the man who wears a sword must be a man of little depth, whereas the experience of those who ought to know, has lately proved that some of the excellent of the earth are now, as in old time, numbered among those who devote their lives to the service of their country; and perhaps there is no situation in which true piety appears with such lustre, as when it discovers itself amid all the unfavourable circumstances of a military life.

Had Louisa Harley known that such characters were sometimes found in the army, she might perhaps have been spared the mortification which she afterwards felt in recollecting the levity which she betrayed in the presence of Mr. Cecil Gray. But those who deviate from the way they approve, in order to secure some present gratification, most frequently run into mistakes which prevent the very end for which that deviation was made. Had Louisa firmly adhered to the simple course she had pursued for some months before, her chance of pleasing Cecil Gray would not have been utterly destroyed, as it was by the levity she displayed in his presence, when

abandoning the conduct she secretly approved, in order to enjoy his society.

After the conversation at the window before mentioned, Louisa saw no more of Cecil Gray. He did not appear at the supper-table, from which she arose fatigued and dissatisfied with herself.

The next day Cecil Gray was asked by Captain Vivian, how he liked Miss Louisa Harley?

“She is a lovely young woman,” replied the lieutenant.

“This is a great deal for you to say, Cecil,” remarked the other. “You have long been seeking a wife. Where can your choice rest better than in this place?”

“You mistake me,” said Mr. Gray; “I have never had any thoughts of the kind.”

“Are you then determined never to marry?”

“No,” said Cecil Gray; “I have made no resolution of the kind. And, since you question me so closely, I will plainly tell you, that I wish to leave all concerns of this sort in the hand of Providence.”

“Very good,” said Captain Vivian; “but what do you expect Providence to do more for you, than to put a lovely young woman of good family in your way? And where will you see any thing superior to Louisa Harley?”

“In no place, perhaps,” said Cecil Gray; “and yet I should not dare to venture my happiness in her hands.”

“And why not?” returned Captain Vivian.

Cecil Gray smiled; but there was a sorrowful expression in the smile. He however remained silent, till Captain Vivian pressing him again, he replied, “To speak the truth, I must have a serious wife, Vivian. I dare not trust myself with a woman who does not answer this description.”

“Serious!” repeated the other, laughing, “what do you mean by serious? Do you mean religious? I have heard that Louisa Harley is the most religious young woman in the town.”

“It may be so,” said Cecil Gray; “but let us call another subject. Miss Harley has my respect and admiration; and perhaps it would be presumptuous to suppose that she would think of me were I to offer myself.” Thus the conversation ceased; and from that time Cecil Gray never mentioned Miss Harley in the presence of his brother-officers.

The detachment remained some months in D——, but Cecil Gray was not with them the whole time. It being reported that the corps would probably soon go abroad, he asked leave of absence, for the purpose of visiting his mother; after which he was ordered into the north, on the recruiting-service, and did not rejoin his regiment while it remained in England, nor for some time afterwards.

But to return to Louisa Harley. The day after the unfortunate assembly at Dr. Holloway's, she was in company where the remarkably fine character of Cecil Gray was made the subject of discourse by a person who knew his mother, and had been acquainted with him from a child: and then, and not till then, was Louisa made sensible of the folly and levity of her conduct on the preceding day. She then recollected his disinclination to join in the dance, and his repeated efforts to draw her into rational conversation. She remembered also, with an inconceivable degree of shame and vexation, the vanity and lightness of her own behaviour, together with her deviation from those rules of conduct which she had laid down for herself and pursued for so many months with increasing comfort and advantage. And recalling to mind, amid these distressing recollections, the characters of Law's Miranda, Richardson's Clarissa, and other fabulous patterns of self-derived perfection, she could not forbear asking herself, "Why cannot I do as these did? what is it that causes me to fall thus grievously when tempted? or why cannot I conduct myself as Mr. Gray does? Why cannot I resist temptation as he does? What peculiar weakness is there in me, which causes me to make such grievous falls whenever I am placed in a state of trial?" In this manner she often reasoned with herself, till she found that Cecil Gray had actually left the town; when she again renounced all society, formed new rules and regulations for her conduct, and made new efforts to establish her own righteousness.

As long as this young lady's shame and depression of spirits continued, all seemed to go on well: but the spirits of youth are buoyant, and the sense of shame from natural causes soon passes away. In a few weeks after Cecil Gray's departure, Louisa Harley began to smile again; and as she no longer made the same efforts to conceal herself from society, as during her dejected state of

mind, Captain Vivian found means not only to introduce himself to the aunt, but even to ingratiate himself so far with the niece, that, after a due period of courtship, she consented to become his wife ; contrary to many resolutions which she had formed, of never marrying a man who was not decidedly religious.

But, as I have before said, Louisa Harley's religion was a religion of form ; it had little to do with the heart. There was no divine strength imparted by it to the mind of its possessor ; and though it might have some little effect in influencing the conduct where the affections were not concerned, it was utterly powerless when engaged in a contest with the passions, leaving the character entirely in its original state, the will unsubdued, the reason dark, and the imagination without control.

The first six weeks of Louisa's marriage were spent with her husband in her aunt's lodgings in the country, where the new married pair beguiled the time with rural walks, and other such pastimes. But at the end of this period the regiment was suddenly ordered to the coast previous to its embarkation for a foreign country, which proved to be the East Indies ; in consequence of which Louisa was at once plunged into all the hurry and confusion incident to a military life.

And now the character of this young lady was called to a new and severe test. There was little opportunity in a crowded and noisy lodging at Portsmouth, for the observance of any one of those forms of religion, to which she had hitherto attended with so much accuracy. There were indeed places of public worship in the town ; but sometimes she had difficulty to learn the hours of divine service, and at other times, when she was just prepared to make her way through streets full of drunken sailors to a remote church, she was not unfrequently prevented by the coming in of her husband from the barracks with a party of his friends, calling in haste for a barrel of oysters or a mutton chop, and at the same time requiring his wife to sit down at the head of her table and assist in entertaining his companions.

Compared with this kind of life, even the cabin of an East India-man was peaceful ; and Louisa was not sorry when she found herself settled in such a cabin as a crowded vessel could afford, in which all the convenient

berths had been engrossed by passengers, before the destination of the regiment was known.

During a five months' voyage from England to Bengal, Mr. and Mrs. Vivian had opportunity of seeing more of each other, than twenty years' residence in a quiet country town would have afforded them.

While under probation for the favour of Louisa, and while the first fervour of his affection lasted, amid the calm delights of their residence in the country, Captain Vivian very cheerfully acquiesced in all the religious forms which his wife thought it necessary to observe. But after their embarkation on board the East India-man, he was never without an excuse as often as she pressed him to the serious duties of reading or prayer. On these occasions he regularly made his escape from the cabin, generally indeed with a playful air, but sometimes with a surliness of manner which excited considerable irritation in Louisa's mind, and led her frequently to address him not only as an avowed enemy of religion, but as one in a state of hopeless reprobation. These improper attacks on her part made the subject of religion more hateful to him than ever; for although he knew not what true religion was, yet he knew well enough what it ought not to be: so that when his wife assailed him upon the subject, he frequently told her, that he believed he had as much true religion as she had; adding, that if her piety did not teach her the duty she owed her husband, he considered it as of very little use.

It may be supposed that Louisa, who was naturally sweet tempered, had been considerably provoked before she began to reproach her husband with so much bitterness as to draw upon herself such unqualified censure: but the false views of religion which she had so long entertained were precisely such as administer most largely to the natural pride of man's heart, rendering him uncharitable to his fellow-creatures, and abundantly more prone to condemn than to conciliate his opposers. He that has just views of religion knows his own depravity; and if he is made to differ from another, he knows to whom alone the glory is due: so that without taking any credit to himself on any occasion, his heart is habitually drawn out in love toward the sinner he reprobates, even while he shrinks with horror from the pollution of sin.

In this uncomfortable manner did these young people pass their time, during the first few weeks of their residence on board ship.

In the mean while, the vessel was tossed about in the Bay of Biscay by adverse winds. At length, however, entering into a finer climate, the female passengers were enabled to appear more frequently in public, and the society on board became more lively.

Louisa Harley's mind, as we have before remarked, was always strongly affected by the passing scene; and on this occasion she became so entirely occupied by her new companions, that, before she was aware of any change in her habits, she had for a considerable time omitted all her usual forms of devotion: nor can it be told how long this omission might have escaped her own observation, had not her husband one day awakened her to some compunction, by complimenting her upon the change which had taken place in her character, assuring her, that she was become infinitely more agreeable since she had ceased to be a religious persecutor. This remark, though not intended to produce such an effect, occasioned some little revival of her pious feelings: but it was of no duration, the lively company by which she was surrounded very soon engrossing her attention again; insomuch that upon her landing in India, she was as eager to partake of its pleasures and gaieties as any person attached to the regiment.

As Fort-William, which is the station for troops at Calcutta, was completely full when the regiment arrived in India, it was immediately put in boats on the Hoogley, and sent up the country to a beautiful situation in the province of Behar, called Ghazepoor. This station is surrounded by fields of roses, whose delightful odours perfume all the neighbouring country during the season of their bloom.

Ghazepoor stands on a high bank of the Ganges. In this place, over an extensive plain, are scattered many bungalows for officers and other gentlemen resident in the station, with several ranges of barracks for soldiers. The country around is generally flat, abounding in corn plantations, beautifully diversified with groves of mangoe and tamarind, together with fine specimens of the pepul, a tree which is held sacred by the superstitious natives;

on account of a remarkable trembling and rustling among its leaves, which continues even during those intervals when not the smallest breath of air is observed to agitate the leaf of any other plant.

When arrived at this station, Captain Vivian speedily procured a handsome house, where he established his family in the utmost luxury which his ample pay would afford. He supplied himself with carriages of various descriptions, entertained as many as thirty servants, and furnished his house not merely as the resident of a day, but as one who had the probable certainty of finishing his course upon earth in that place of his sojourn.

I have no doubt but that my reader will be anxious to know how Louisa conducted herself in this new situation, and whether her former religious profession produced any effect on her present conduct, now that she was excluded from all the ordinary means of grace: for there was no place of worship at that time in Ghazepoor, nor for hundreds of miles round; and few perhaps of the English inhabitants of the place had even so much as a copy of the word of God in their possession. I am sorry to say, and yet it is perhaps no more than might be expected, that Mrs. Vivian, although she not unfrequently expressed her regret at the want of a place of public worship, acquiesced nevertheless very quietly in that deficiency—and, what is still more, so thoroughly was she engaged by the new mode of life upon which she had entered, that for some time she never felt the need of those religious observances which had once formed the occupation of her life.

It may hereafter be made to appear still more plainly than has hitherto been done, that Louisa had never yet discovered in what true religion consists, nor had ever been made sensible of its real influence; and that hence she was enabled to rest contented without those empty forms, from which she had in vain endeavoured to obtain satisfaction. Thus much however is certain, that, after her arrival in India, and on being introduced to a situation in which she was absolutely excluded from the appointed means of divine worship and instruction, she yielded without a struggle to existing circumstances, becoming altogether as lax in her *private* as she was compelled to be in her *public* habits of devotion: and being

at the same time attracted by the new objects which surrounded her, as well as amused by the novel forms of Indian life, she shortly became as complete a votary of the world, as any of those ladies of her acquaintance who had never taken up a religious profession.

Her husband speedily observed this change in her habits, though he refrained from making any remarks upon it; because, as her religion had formerly proved a source of discord between them, he feared to revive the recollection of circumstances which had left no other than disagreeable impressions on his mind. He was, however, not a little delighted to see her set free from what he called her superstitious prejudices, and discovering a state of mind more conformable to the maxims of the world.

As the mode of life adopted by European ladies in India is but little understood in England, we shall here give a description of the manner in which Mrs. Vivian passed her time at the period of which we are speaking. She resided in a large house, elegantly furnished according to the prevailing custom of the country, the floors of the apartments being covered with fine matting, and the walls adorned with glass shades for lamps, or burnished sconces.

In her new residence more than thirty native servants were always ready to obey her call, and every variety of carriage was provided to carry her abroad, either before sun-rise in the morning, or in the evening at the hour of sun-set. It was seldom, however, that Mrs. Vivian used her carriages in a morning; because, although she rose early, she generally spent the hours while her husband attended his duty, in studiously and tastefully arraying herself for appearing at breakfast: at which early meal a large party of officers seldom failed to attend, being as much attracted by the lively conversation of the lady of the house as by the hospitable and elegant repast with which the table was set forth.

In this manner, and in such company, Mrs. Vivian wasted the only hours of the day, which in those burning climates can well be devoted to active duties. And when the heat became oppressive, which generally happens during the greater part of the year about nine o'clock, she withdrew to her own apartments, where, extended on a sofa, she idled away the remainder of the

morning in giving directions to her tailors, looking over her clothes, or reading some amusing book. At one o'clock she was called again into company, this being the hour of luncheon ; and it was considered as an extraordinary thing if several strangers did not drop in about that time. The hours of the afternoon were again devoted to lounging, sleep, and dressing ; after which, Mrs. Vivian took the air in one of her carriages, generally finishing the day in some large public party, among whom she shone forth superbly dressed, with a bloom superior to that of every other lady present, being naturally handsome, and from her recent arrival in that country still bearing on her lips and cheeks some remains of that freshness, which a few years' residence in India infallibly destroys.

Thus passed the first twelvemonth of Mrs. Vivian's residence in India, during the greater part of which she appeared to be in one continued dream of pleasure. But as the novelty of the scene wore away, and as she became accustomed to her many attendants, her numerous carriages, and her variety of superb dresses, an inexpressible degree of listlessness and languor, increased by the depressing effect of the climate, succeeded to the high flow of spirits she had so long experienced. And in addition to this, a prospect being now held out to her of becoming a mother, she suddenly withdrew herself from company, pleading her health as an excuse ; when with the same enthusiasm of character which marked her on all occasions, she devoted herself to making the most elegant preparations for the reception of the expected little stranger.

As Louisa did not insist upon her husband confining himself with her, and as she was cheerful whenever he met her at home, he did not interfere with this new arrangement, especially since she made it appear to him that it was necessary to her health : and thus she was left at full liberty to indulge this new dream of happiness, which became the more dangerous, inasmuch as it was so much more interesting than the one from which she had just awoke.

There is nothing more affecting than to see the unregenerate warmly pursuing one unsubstantial appearance of happiness after another, and, though subject to con-

tinual and certain disappointment, again and again renewing the pursuit in new directions, untaught by experience, and wholly incapable either of comprehending the reason of those failures which are constantly experienced, or of drawing from them any profitable instruction. But to return to Louisa.

The child so earnestly desired, and so carefully provided for before its birth, at length arrived. It was a daughter, and was singularly lovely.

Examples of great human beauty are rare ; but when they do appear, they afford the most attractive sample of the divine power and workmanship : for what are the finest inanimate beauties of creation, when compared with the intellectual glory of the human eye, the exquisite proportion of human features, together with the delicate and varying tints and turns of *the human face divine!*

In the infant Louisa all these charms were united. Whether she was seen reposing in her cradle in innocent sleep, or hanging on her mother's breast, her exquisite beauty excited the admiration of all who beheld her ; so that the pride and maternal love of Mrs. Vivian were equally gratified by the possession of such a child.

But, not to dwell too long on this subject, I will briefly say, that from the time of this dear infant's birth Mrs. Vivian became wholly captivated by its lovely aspect and its endearing behaviour. She now almost entirely shut herself up in her nursery ; and if at any time she went out in her carriage or open palanquin, her baby was upon her lap. She carried it about the house in her arms ; she slept with it in her bosom ; she dressed and fed it with her own hands ; and, in fact, it seemed to absorb her every faculty.

From the time of her ceasing to go out with her husband, he had acquired the habit of visiting alone, and of going much into gentlemen's parties ; and, though he was not unkind to his wife, yet her company became less and less necessary to his happiness. Mrs. Vivian however, being wrapped up in her child, did not so much regret this neglect, since it had the effect of more and more endearing the little infant to her heart, who was at all times ready to greet her with its gentle smiles, extending its little arms towards her, and joyfully springing to her bosom.

Louisa was living in a foreign land, in which she had as yet formed no friendships: she had not even a servant of her own country to speak to; and her husband was constantly abroad. Thus every circumstance conspired to attach her more and more to her captivating companion; while she sweetly yielded to that in which she suspected nothing wrong, and gave up her undivided heart to the little fair one.

Thus one year and a half passed away, and the lovely baby was just able to walk after its mother, and to make some of its little feelings known in such lisping accents as mothers only understand, when one evening, after Mrs. Vivian's return from her airing, which she had taken as usual in her open palanquin with the child on her lap, and during which she had been particularly delighted with the endearing manner of the infant, she was suddenly alarmed at the hour of going to rest by certain indications of fever about her darling, the danger of which she too well understood.

She sent in haste for medical assistance. Remedies were instantly applied; but they had no effect in stopping the swift and deadly march of the disease, which proceeded with such dreadful rapidity, that in less than eight-and-forty hours the little beloved one breathed its last, and left its mother *inconsolable*. Behold here the time and the occasion, which were to prove whether there was aught of real religion in Louisa Vivian or not. She was entering the furnace of affliction—a fiery furnace, in which the stoutest human heart could not but fail; and it now became evident that she had no source of consolation within herself, but that her soul was left without an anchor whereon to rely during the storm which assailed her.

For some weeks after the death of her infant, her grief was violent, and almost frantic: but as her husband himself felt very deeply the loss of his child, he shewed the utmost indulgence to her feelings, and really treated her with all the tenderness of which he was capable. But when week after week passed away, and she still refused all comfort, he became displeased; and arguing with her according to the common modes of worldly comfort, he pleaded, that, severe as their trial was, it was nothing more than the ordinary lot of parents, who seldom have

the satisfaction of seeing all their children grow up to maturity, and that it behoved her to bear this affliction with fortitude, as a duty she owed both to him and to society: adding, that he hoped she would endeavour to shake off her grief, and go out among her friends.

These common-place arguments, however kindly intended, rather irritated than soothed the bereaved mother, who, with a blameable insensibility to the intended kindness of her husband, very vehemently opposed the idea of entering again into the world; assuring him that she had never known happiness since she had forsaken religion and a stricter mode of life for earthly pleasures, and that she was now resolved never to enter again into gay society.

Captain Vivian reasoned with her upon what he termed the folly of this resolution, adding, that he could not see the necessity of such extreme strictness as she had formerly practised, and assuring her, that, if she did not endeavour to overcome her excessive melancholy, and make his house more agreeable to him than it had lately been, he should certainly be driven from home to seek his happiness elsewhere.

A vehement charge of cruelty on the part of his wife, and a pathetic call upon her departed infant, was the only reply which Captain Vivian received to this last remark. And as this charge was repeated whenever he made any attempt to persuade her to overcome her excessive grief, he soon ceased to expostulate; and, not being in the habit of putting any restraint upon his own feelings, he thenceforward absented himself as much as possible from home, leaving his unhappy wife to the full indulgence of her wretched feelings.

They who have never been in foreign countries in a time of affliction can have little idea what sensations of deep abandonment are sometimes experienced in such circumstances. Louisa had made no friends among the ladies in the station—her husband was now continually absent from her—her servants were of another nation, and spoke an unknown language. Thus was this unhappy woman left through many a long and languid day to the full contemplation of her sorrows; till, at length, weary of herself and of all the world, she determined once again to try religion as a source of comfort—when, re-

membering those emotions of self-approbation and satisfaction which she had enjoyed on first turning her mind to serious subjects, and not knowing that youth, and health, and the absence of actual afflictions, had much to do with those frames and feelings, she fancied that it might be possible, by a similar course of duties, to procure to herself a return of the same agreeable sensations. No sooner had she conceived this idea, than her actions received a new spring, and, with the zeal natural to her character, she began to arrange for herself a new set of devotional forms and observances. And, inasmuch as there were no established modes of worship in the cantonments, she had the wider latitude for exercising her own invention in prescribing to herself a set of rules and customs which she judged would be equivalent to those public ordinances which it was now no longer in her power to attend.

For a while she found her thoughts somewhat diverted from her loss by these newly imposed duties, which led her to imagine, that by them she should presently make such a merit with her God, that it would become an act of justice in him to afford her consolation.

Thus she laboured to work out her own happiness; while all her hopes arose, not from what her God could and would do for her, but from what she could do for him. She had as yet no faith; she knew not what it was: and in consequence, after having laboured awhile in this way, rendering herself and her religion again very unpleasant to her husband, she at length became weary of her fruitless efforts; and, confessing to herself that all her observances were mere vanities unable to reach the heart, she suddenly relinquished them in disgust, sinking again into a state of deep dejection, in which no object had power sufficient to fix her attention but the remembrance of the little angel whom she had lost.

During the period while her mind was taken up with her religious duties, Captain Vivian had more than once attempted to reason her out of the new mode of life which she had adopted; but his arguments had only given occasion to new quarrels, since she insisted, that in all her observances she did no more than her duty, and that she could entertain no reasonable hope of do-

mestic happiness till he should become her companion in these exercises.

In consequence of these disagreements, he generally left her to herself, till she began to relax a little in the severity of these forms ; when he again took occasion to press her to go out with him, and so far prevailed, that for several days together she accompanied him to his friends' houses, where she not only appeared cheerful, but was more than once betrayed into a degree of gaiety which, in her situation, almost bordered on levity—sometimes laughing immoderately, and at other times appearing far from insensible to the admiration which her fine appearance always excited.

To those who have made but few observations on human nature, the character of Louisa Vivian may perhaps appear one of almost impossible inconsistency ; while others, who have been deeper observers, or who have been much in the habit of looking into their own minds, will acknowledge, that there is no inconsistency of which our nature is not capable ; and that, in fact, there is no character truly established and consistent but that which is influenced and upheld by the immediate power of God himself : according to that which is written, *They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles ; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.* (Isaiah xl. 31.) But to return to my narrative.

Captain Vivian had hoped that the spirits of his wife would have been essentially benefited by her going into company. But in this view he was mistaken : for, on after reflection, she considered every expression of mirth which had escaped her, as an injury to the memory of her infant ; and this idea operated so strongly upon her mind, and occasioned such a return of deep dejection every morning after being in company, that she at length informed her husband, that it was her determination to go out no more, but to remain at home, and reflect without interruption on the happiness she had lost, " For," added she, " if by going from home, I am enabled to throw off my sorrows for a few hours, the sense of them afterwards returns upon me with an additional weight which I am unable to bear."

This declaration on the part of Mrs. Vivian, which

was made one day with peculiar emphasis at the moment when he was going out to evening parade, made her husband extremely angry ; insomuch that he said aloud, as he descended the steps of the verandah to mount his horse, “ Well, take your own way, I shall speak to you no more upon these subjects. If you do not choose to go out with me, I must make up my mind to it ; and this evening I shall go to the mess, where I hope to enjoy the society of Cecil Gray.”

“ Cecil Gray ! ” repeated Mrs. Vivian. “ Is he arrived in this country ? ”

“ Yes,” replied her husband ; “ and I should have told you so before, had I thought any thing in the world could have interested you beyond the sphere of your own private feelings.” Thus saying, he spurred his Arab horse, and flew over the plain with a swiftness which rendered it difficult for his panting *sais* to keep up with him.

“ *My own private feelings !* ” repeated Louisa, who was sitting in the verandah when her husband left her.—

“ *My own private feelings !* And has the father of my departed infant ceased altogether to participate in these feelings ! Oh, my Louisa,” added she, “ child of my heart ! sweetest companion of my solitary hours ! art thou so soon, so very soon forgotten ! has the memory of thy enchanting smiles, thy infantine charms, thy extraordinary beauty, thy dovelike glances, already perished with thee in the tomb ? Oh, my baby ! my baby ! thy father may forget thee, but thy mother, thy miserable mother, will lose the remembrance of thee only with her life.” So saying, she leaned her head against one of the pillars of the verandah, while her fast flowing tears fell on the polished floor.

How long she had remained in this attitude she knew not, nor could she have retraced the many sad trains of thought which had passed through her mind during that interval, when suddenly her attention was arrested by the quick step of some one hastily approaching, and at the same minute, lifting up her tearful eyes, she saw Cecil Gray, who, a moment afterwards, ascended the verandah, and accosted her with a warmth and strength of feeling, which plainly indicated that he was acquainted with, and participating in, her sorrows.

At the sight of this young man, whose appearance

and manner had once very considerably interested her, and of whose arrival with the regiment she had not heard an hour before, she suddenly started from her attitude of sorrow, and hastily wiping away the tears from her eyes, welcomed him with somewhat of her former sprightliness ; and then, sinking again into sorrow, she said, "Oh, Mr. Gray, how full of vain delight I was when I last saw you ! I was then an entire stranger to sorrow ; but now I am completely miserable !"

"*Miserable !*" repeated he—"miserable, my dear Madam ! You use a very comprehensive word ; it argues an entire want of comfort : how can I suppose it applicable to your situation ?"

Mrs. Vivian then entered into a lively and touching account of her severe bereavement ; after which she described, with her usual strength of expression, the state of her mind under the present affliction, which was that, she said, of a person incapable of receiving comfort.

The countenance of the young man displayed an expression of no common sympathy, while she thus painted her unhappy state to him : and when she had ceased, he spoke to her of religion, assuring her, that there was no affliction which could beset man, under which religion had not provided a suitable consolation.

"Religion !" repeated Mrs. Vivian, with a deep sigh—"yes ; I have heard of the consolations of religion ; I am no infidel ; I do not question the power of God, neither do I doubt but that there are some blessed individuals who have found happiness in religion : but I have tried it repeatedly, and have never derived from it that boasted peace, of which you speak. I will sincerely confess to you, though I have not done so much to my husband, because I am unwilling to strengthen his prejudices, that although I have been unremitting in my endeavours (during my affliction) to obtain the consolations of religion, they have been wholly without effect ; insomuch that I am ready now in despair to renounce all my groundless expectations, and to yield myself up to hopeless grief."

Cecil Gray looked earnestly at her, while she continued to speak, his countenance being still expressive of the deepest commiseration ; for when he recollects the happy and beautiful Louisa Harley, and considered that the

time once was, when, had she possessed true piety, he should have preferred her above all her sex, it was not without the deepest sense of pity, that he could now behold her a prey to hopeless sorrow, and a subject of unbelief—he resolved therefore to be sincere with her in pointing out *where* she had always failed in her religious views, and *how* she had missed of that peace which she so earnestly desired.

“ You speak, Madam,” said he, “ of religion, and assure me that it has failed to afford you comfort: do you feel quite assured, permit me to ask, that you have sought this comfort in a right way ? ”

Mrs. Vivian looked up at him, (for he was still standing, leaning against one of the pillars of the verandah, forgetting, in the warmth of his feelings, to take the seat tendered him by a native servant,) requesting him to repeat his question before she replied, and to accompany it with some explanation.

“ Are you thoroughly assured, Madam,” said Cecil Gray, “ that you know what religion is ? ”

That so polite a man as Cecil Gray should ask her such a question, startled Mrs. Vivian. Had any person made this enquiry, whom she could have supposed to be an ignorant and vulgar enthusiast, she would not have been surprised. But Mr. Gray being a man of high birth, and of the first character as a gentleman and a Christian, she was greatly astonished at such a question—to which, however, she replied by describing to him the advantages which she had possessed in early life of being made acquainted with religion, and pointing out the minute exactness with which she had at one time attended to all the forms and external observances enjoined by the Church. She spoke also of the serious impression she had received previous to confirmation, giving him such a view of her religious life as made him perfectly acquainted with the real state of her mind.

After listening calmly till she had ceased to speak, he addressed her thus—“ You say, my dear Madam, that you have not found that comfort from religion which you expected; that it has afforded you no support under affliction; and that you are even now ready to give it up in despair. I ask you, on what ground you expected that comfort, and why you thought yourself entitled to it ? ”

"Because," said she, with increasing wonder, "because I have been always led to understand, that religion is able to afford comfort in affliction; and I have heard and read of many who have been enabled by it to pass through the most severe trials with cheerfulness."

"But who are those," said Cecil Gray, "who experience these consolations? Have you ever considered this point, my dear Madam? or have you ever enquired, whether you are of that blessed number?"

Mrs. Vivian hesitated; upon which Cecil Gray, perceiving how entirely at a loss she was, and not doubting but that she was utterly ignorant of the first principles of religion, proceeded without hesitation to enter into such an explanation of them as he trusted might, with the divine assistance, throw some degree both of light and comfort on her dark and afflicted mind. He first spoke to her concerning the acknowledged attributes of the Deity—his omnipotence, his omnipresence, his fore-knowledge, his justice, his mercy, and his holiness—whence he proceeded to point out that striking peculiarity of the Godhead which is revealed in Scripture, namely, the Trinity-in-Unity; together with the nature and offices of these glorious persons, and especially the part taken by each in man's salvation.

"The word of God," continued this pious young officer, "discovers to us the way of salvation laid down in the covenant of grace, manifesting to us what the ever-blessed Trinity therein purposed, and what, in the fulness of time, was accomplished for fallen man's restoration. It shews the believer, how God the Father, who foresaw the fall of man before the foundation of the world, (brought about by the malice of Satan,) provided for him a Saviour, who should have power to overcome his spiritual foes, and to present him before the bar of divine justice, clothed in unblemished and spotless righteousness. It points out also how God the Son, the second person in the Godhead, coequal, and coeternal with the Father, undertook to become the Saviour of mankind, and to endure the utmost weight of the divine anger against sin, in order that he might bring the sinner to glory. And finally," proceeded Cecil Gray, "it shews the nature and offices of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the ever-blessed Trinity, by whom the redeemed

are convinced of sin, and taught their need of a Saviour, having their dead souls regenerated and quickened by his infinite power. Thus," continued the young man, "these three glorious persons are equally engaged in one mighty work, more wonderful, more honourable to God, and better calculated to display the goodness, mercy, holiness, and justice of the Almighty, than the creation of millions of planets, or tens of millions of blazing stars."

"And now, Madam," continued Cecil Gray, "I return to the question, which I put to you at first—Who are those who experience the consolations of religion? Not those, I answer, who attend to the mere outward forms and external rites of religion; but those who have been convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, by the Holy Spirit. They who have been led by him into clear views of their own utter depravity, and their absolute need of a Saviour; they whose understanding has been opened to comprehend the covenant of grace, and the work of the eternal Trinity; they who are convinced that there is righteousness and strength, comfort and joy, grace and glory, laid up for them in Christ; they who are willing to rest on him and trust in him, renouncing all self-confidence—these are they, who, being united to Christ by faith, who, being regenerate by grace, and become the children of God, have a right, by the terms of the everlasting covenant, to all the privileges and consolations of religion; to feed upon the promises, and to rest in the full and sweet assurance, that their *light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*" (2 Cor. iv. 17.)

While Cecil Gray was still speaking, a sudden shower, common in those climates, which had for a few minutes beat against the steps of the verandah, passed rapidly away, when the dark clouds breaking from above, and suddenly dispersing, exhibited a beautiful and brilliant rainbow, extending over the whole horizon, and presenting the glorious type of that blessed covenant of mercy, with which the Lord encompasses his people.

The sudden splendour of light shed upon the ground from the glowing heavens, drew the attention of Cecil Gray, who, unconsciously looking up for the cause of it,

saw with admiration this magnificent though natural display of divine glory; when instantly directing the eye of his attentive companion to the heavenly arch, he pointed out this beautiful emblem of the everlasting covenant, formed of the seven primitive colours, blended so softly together, that no discord, no harshness appeared among them, but all united in forming one glorious and harmonious whole, including the visible horizon in its ample embrace, and shedding sweet surprise, together with a sense of security, on all beholders. "Thus," said he, "does the blessed covenant, of which this heavenly arch is the acknowledged type, assure those who look upon it with the eye of faith, of final deliverance from every evil, and, above all, from that flood of wrath which, in the last day, shall overwhelm the ungodly; transfusing peace and gladness through the mourner's heart, and conveying the assurance of support and consolation under the most severe affliction."

Louisa, when thus called upon, looked up; but her eyes presently filling with tears, she again dropped them, though with an expression so much softened from that which she had displayed at the commencement of their discourse, that Cecil Gray was encouraged to proceed in the same manner in which he had begun, venturing to promise her consolation so soon as she should be able to receive that view of heavenly love, which he (though in a manner the most imperfect) had endeavoured to set before her.

"How sweet it is," he added, "to have a conviction that we are the objects of divine love and compassion, and to feel an assurance, whatever our trials and afflictions may be, however great our weakness and folly, however numerous our failures and short comings, that we shall undoubtedly be enabled to bear all through Christ strengthening us, that we shall be upheld through all, and carried at last triumphantly above all into a state of everlasting glory! The prophet says, *Neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid; sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear; and he shall be for a sanctuary.*" (Isa. viii. 13, 14.)

In this manner Cecil Gray continued to converse with Mrs. Vivian, being led to speak more at large to her on these topics than he might otherwise have done, from a

conviction that she stood in need of comfort, and had no friend to whom she could open her mind on these most solemn subjects—and he was still conversing with her, when Captain Vivian appeared advancing on horseback over the plain. This gentleman being seen by them for some time before he joined them, Mr. Gray took occasion to speak of him with affection, saying, that he was his first acquaintance in the regiment, and adding, that nothing would give him more pleasure, than to witness a serious change passing upon his mind with respect to the infinitely important subjects on which they had been conferring.

“ Could I but hope,” answered Louisa, “ for a continuance of your friendship for Captain Vivian, I should have some prospect of better things for him ; since your conversation has this evening convinced me that I have never yet understood the true nature of religion, and that the very means which I have hitherto used to engage my husband in serious pursuits, have been only calculated to render all such pursuits the more hateful in his sight.”

Captain Vivian, who had been in pursuit of Cecil Gray for the last two hours, and had at length traced him to his own house, sprang from his horse at sight of his friend ; and finding him not disinclined to spend the evening with him, and Mrs. Vivian in a disposition to be pleased, he gave up all thoughts of the mess, and listened with more complacency than could have been expected to the communications of his friend, which, if not always wholly spiritual, was so little blended with earthly matters, that it could not be supposed to possess many charms for a man of the world. But Captain Vivian was sincerely attached to Cecil Gray ; and on this account he bore much from him which he probably would not have endured from another man.

From this period Mrs. Vivian rejoiced to see her husband constantly associated with Mr. Gray ; and, as her own views of religion became more clear and enlarged, she became daily more reconciled to the afflictive dispensation with which it had pleased the Almighty to exercise her. She saw, by faith, that the happiness of her beloved infant had been ensured by its early death ; that it had been saved from many afflictions, and perhaps from much guilt, by being called at the commencement

of its earthly course into the presence of its Saviour: and the view which was now given her of the divine love enabled her to look upon this severe trial as a means employed by her heavenly Father to awaken her from the death of sin, and effectually to prepare her heart for the reception of the heavenly seed. She was also made to see, that she had hitherto rested entirely in the externals of religion, placing all her dependence upon her own good works; in consequence of which she had utterly fallen short of all the blessings and comforts which are provided for those who are reconciled to God, through the Son of his love.

Thus, by the divine blessing, before many months had passed, so entire a change was effected in the mind of Mrs. Vivian, as enabled her to meditate upon the past with resignation, and to contemplate the future with hope and joy.

It was now more than a year since Mrs. Vivian had committed to the dust that beloved infant which had once formed the delight of her life; and several months had elapsed since the conversation above related took place. That conversation had been particularly blessed to her; and there was reason to think, that, from that period, a decided change had taken place in her character and religious feelings. In the mean while, her views became daily more clear and encouraging; of which she gave evidence by the maintenance of a conduct that so entirely reinstated her in the regard of her husband, as obliged him more than once to remark, that she was now more lovely in his eyes than when he first saw her in all the bloom of early beauty.

Captain Vivian was a man of the world, and of an ordinary mind: nevertheless it pleased the Lord to give his wife no small influence over him, which influence she had indeed at one time lost by the indiscretion of her conduct, but which she presently recovered, when, by the power of a pure and holy faith, she was made sensible that it was her duty to please and obey him, and to make her religion amiable in his eyes by the sweetness and humility of her deportment. One thing she ardently coveted for him; this was the friendship of Cecil Gray: and she had great pleasure in observing the readiness of this young officer to forward her views

of this sort, by never withdrawing himself on any occasion when Captain Vivian sought his society.

Being thus restored to the affections of her husband, and finding daily more delight in religion, Mrs. Vivian had now arrived at such a state of mind as was much to be preferred to any thing she had experienced throughout her whole life, even during that part of it which she remembered with most pleasure, when she had enjoyed the presence of her lovely and beautiful infant; for even then her satisfactions were mixed with many anxious feelings, while every change of countenance in her captivating baby served to awaken the most painful apprehensions. But her comforts were now of a less inconstant and perishable nature: her will was subdued, and her affections sanctified.

The fine cool period of the year was now succeeded by the sultry season. Louisa had hitherto enjoyed good health, having experienced no other disadvantage from the climate than that which is commonly felt by Europeans, namely, an extreme degree of langour during certain portions of the year. It was therefore not to be wondered at, if neither she nor her friends had any apprehension of an event, which we shall presently have occasion to relate.

Since the change in her conduct before mentioned, Captain Vivian had remained much at home, seeming never more happy than when spending his time in the company of his wife. Accordingly it happened one evening, there being no parade at which his presence was required, that returning early from his public duties, he gave her his hand, and invited her to take the air. It was then cool, there having fallen much rain during the day. He led her out upon the plain, and unconsciously took a direction towards the burying-ground, which lay not very distant.

What parent can behold the place where his infant sleeps, cradled on the cold earth, in that long and deep repose which is not to be disturbed till the morning of the resurrection, without some feelings of sorrow: and though those feelings may be sweetly mitigated, and their very nature changed, by an assurance of the everlasting happiness of the little beloved one, yet there will remain, on all such occasions, a certain sentiment of

tender regret which can never be wholly overcome. Such were the feelings of Mrs. Vivian, as she turned her eye towards the burying-ground before her, and saw the moon arising in cloudless majesty beyond the lofty trees which grew within the wall of that sacred inclosure.

Captain Vivian, aware of her feelings, and taking hold of the hand which rested on his arm, endeavoured to bring forward some of the arguments which he had heard her use to prove the present happiness of their little daughter; and, although he managed those arguments unskilfully, there was yet a kindness in the effort which touched the heart of his wife, and constrained her to assure him that she was perfectly resigned, through the divine assistance, to what the Almighty had ordained with respect to their dear child; and that she looked back upon her rebellious conduct on the occasion of her infant's death with shame and horror. Then passing from that painful subject, she proceeded to describe the revolution which had taken place in her religious feelings; when recurring to her former views on that point, she acknowledged that she was now fully aware that her conduct to him on board ship, and since that period, had often been extremely perverse, and strangely calculated to make him hate rather than love religion. She concluded by requesting him not to set down her misconduct on those occasions to her excess of religion, but to her actual and absolute want of it.

His answer was exceedingly affectionate. He confessed, that if she had formerly in some degree strengthened his prejudices against religion, she had lately, by the sweetness of her manner, taught him to respect and love it.

Thus they continued to converse till it was time to return home—and this evening Captain Vivian proposed, that they should join in prayer; a proposal which he had never before made to any one in his life. But whether this proposal was made from courtesy to his wife, or from motives of piety, cannot well be determined. At any rate, it was a proof how much more the gentle nature of true piety is likely to prevail over the stubborn will of the unconverted man, than the unbending rigour of the self-sufficient formalist.

In this manner closed the last serene and peaceful evening of Louisa's life. She went to bed with an easy mind, and, apparently, in excellent health: but before sunrise the next day she was taken with an epidemic disorder, at that time prevalent in India, and although every assistance was given which art could supply, a very short period terminated her life. Mrs. Vivian was sensible only at intervals during her illness; but during one of these short intervals she expressed much gratitude to her Almighty Father for that course of affliction by which he had withdrawn her from the world, giving her at the same time both leisure and inclination for serious meditation.

She died in perfect assurance of happiness, and giving all the glory from first to last to the Lord her God—to him who had loved and chosen her before the foundation of the world—to him who had purchased that glory for her to which she was speedily departing—and who had fitted her by his grace for the full enjoyment of it.

The farewell she took of her husband was inexpressibly touching; and her last request to him was, that he would cultivate the friendship of Cecil Gray—a request which was reported to the young gentleman by a person then present, and which, as the last request of Louisa Harley, could not fail to produce its intended effect upon one who had invariably felt for her a sincere and friendly regard.

The funeral of Mrs. Vivian was attended by all the officers of the regiment, and a deep solemnity was for some time shed over the whole cantonment by her death: for who could count their lives secure, when beauty, youth, and health were so unexpectedly cut off?

Immediately after her funeral, Cecil Gray entered Captain Vivian's bungalow, and took the afflicted husband to his own house, where he offered him an apartment. These young men from that time became almost inseparable; though it was not till some years afterwards that Cecil Gray found in Captain Vivian a friend and companion in whose society he could really take pleasure.

Captain Vivian never forgot the last conversation which he had held with his beloved wife; and he was often heard to say, that some expressions which she

then used, were such as first gave him (under the divine blessing) any right idea of the true nature of religion.

When the lady of the manor had concluded the affecting history of Louisa Harley, she took occasion to point out the lesson which was to be drawn from it, namely, that we should carefully beware of allowing ourselves to rest in the exterior forms of religion, without endeavouring to obtain the spirit and substance thereof. "At the same time," said she, "we should not neglect the ordinances; because since it is appointed of God that we should seek the divine blessing through the use of certain means, we have a right to expect them through those means rather than through any other channel. In this respect, we ought to take warning and example from the history of Naaman the Syrian, who, after having been directed by the prophet to wash in Jordan and be clean, exclaimed in anger—*Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean?* So he turned, and went away in a rage. And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, *My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?* Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. (2 Kings v. 12—14.) In like manner, as the Lord directed Naaman to seek health in the waters of Jordan, so he directs us to seek salvation in the use of certain appointed means. To neglect therefore these means, becomes an act of unbelief and disobedience; and they who act thus, have as little reason to expect the divine blessing as the contrary description of persons, who, like Louisa Harley, make a merit of observing the means of grace, without looking beyond the form and exterior of religion. Let us then, my young people," continued the lady of the manor, "finish this evening's conference by earnestly praying that the Almighty will enable us to fulfil all our religious duties, and especially that which is now before us, not only as mere formalists, but in such a manner as may approve us in His

sight who *seeth not as man seeth* ; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (1 Sam. xvi. 7.)

*Prayer of the Lady of the Manor for Sincerity.*

" O ALMIGHTY and heavenly Father, we, who now approach the footstool of thy throne, know that thou art the Searcher of all hearts, and that thou understandest all the imaginations of the mind. We know, also, the tendency of our nature to satisfy our consciences with the mere semblance of that which is right, and that we are continually inclined to draw nigh unto Thee with our mouth, and to do thee honour with our lips, while our hearts are carried far from thee ; our fear of thee being only such as is taught by the precepts of men.

" O cleanse and purify the thoughts of our hearts, by that which alone can cleanse them, even by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, through which only the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, and the heart of stone converted into an heart of flesh. O grant, that our service may not be the eye-service of men-pleasers ; but may we engage in it with fear and trembling, and in singleness of heart, as the servants of that dear Saviour who shed his blood for us upon the cross.

" And O heavenly Father, assist us to lament and bewail, in bitterness of heart, and deep contrition of soul, the many hypocritical and formal services which we have already presumed to offer thee. How often, how very often, have we profaned thy holy temple, and the courts of thine house, by our irreverent behaviour, our wandering affections, and our shameful disregard of thy most blessed and all-glorious name ! How often have we knelt before thee at the season of morning and evening devotions, while our thoughts were occupied upon temporal concerns, and greedily going after vanity ! How often have we used the words of God as mere formalists, and solely to establish our characters with men ! And finally, how often, how very often, have we condemned others for these things, when we ought rather to have stood self-condemned, and without excuse before God, for our own exceeding sinfulness and the hypocrisy of our heart.

" And now, even now, O Lord, while we are confess-

ing our coldness and hypocrisy before thee, even now we have reason to lament and deplore the deadness of our best affections, and the wanderings of our thoughts. O Lord, have mercy, have mercy upon us! Our very prayers are polluted with sin, and our tears of repentance have need to be washed in a purer stream. But there is one who ever intercedeth for us, even Christ, our brother in the flesh—that dear Saviour, who, when he had suffered the punishment due to our sin, ascended into heaven, where he ever liveth to offer up his pure and prevailing prayer on our account. We will therefore lie at the foot of thy cross, O blessed Jesus, cast down and self-condemned, yet not without hope, knowing that our Redeemer is mighty, and that he will plead our cause. Although we are utterly vile, yet will we not despair; though our prayers have hitherto been the prayers of hypocrites, and our best works but filthy rags, yet will we greatly rejoice in the Lord, and our soul shall be joyful in our God; for he will clothe us with the garments of salvation, and cover us with the robe of righteousness, even as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels.

“Now to God the Father,” &c.

When the lady of the manor had concluded her prayer, she dismissed the young people, expressing her hope that they might speedily meet again.

## CHAPTER IV.

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Q. *What is your Name?*

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. *Who gave you this Name?*

A. *My Godfathers and Godmothers in my Baptism, wherein I was made a Member of Christ, a Child of God, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

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THE candidates for confirmation being again gathered round the lady of the manor, she opened the conversation in the following manner.—

“ My dear young people, as the Catechism of the Church of England is appointed by our Church to be committed to memory before confirmation, I think it may not be amiss to make this form of words the basis of our examination. I shall thus be led on to take the several doctrines of our holy religion into consideration each in its proper place; and by having this well known form of words to recur to, you will be better enabled, in after life, to bring to your recollection our several conversations in their due order. But, before I attempt to enter upon an explanation of the Catechism of our Church, I think it right to say, that I do not consider it as a composition altogether faultless. I am, as I before said, a member of the Church of England, strongly attached to its liturgy, and pleased with many of its forms; to which may be added, that I look upon its doctrines, in all essential points, as being perfectly conformable to Scripture. But, inasmuch as nothing human is infallible, there are, in my opinion, some smaller matters in the constitution of our Church, which perhaps might be amended: although, as the flaws in a beautiful piece of workmanship are often suffered to remain through the

fear of injuring the whole in attempting to improve a part, it has been judged most prudent by many excellent members of our Church, to leave these lesser matters as they are, rather than, by attempting a reform, to endanger the whole fabric. The Church of England, however, notwithstanding the few spots which appear in its brilliant disk, must needs be considered as a luminary of distinguished lustre; and the time I hope is coming, when those clouds of darkness, ignorance, and party-spirit, which have overshadowed, for some years past, our whole horizon, will be completely dissipated by the bright blaze of its glory.

"The opening of our Church Catechism," continued the lady of the manor, "is perhaps one of the most obscure passages which has crept into our prayer-book, as hath been acknowledged by some of our most respectable divines. Whatever the opinions of its compilers may have been, this passage is so worded as to mislead its readers, and that upon a point of vital importance, namely, the subject of regeneration: because, though baptism is the outward and visible sign of the new birth, yet it is not necessarily connected with it—insomuch that many are baptized, who are not regenerated; while many, we trust, are regenerated, who have never received its outward sign and visible seal. But," proceeded the lady of the manor, "as I shall have occasion to speak more largely upon this subject in its proper place, I shall leave it at this time for matters more suited to the present state of your acquaintance with divine things."

Having premised thus much, the lady of the manor addressed herself to the youngest in the room, and said, "What is your name?"

The young lady answered, "Sophia."

Here the lady of the manor made this remark:—"You observe, my young people, that, in the reply to this question, 'What is your name?' the Christian name only is mentioned. The giving of a name in baptism has nothing to do with religion: it is merely a custom, and, in my opinion, an unexceptionable one, though, I believe, not approved by some denominations of Christians. I have, however, upon record, an instance in which this custom was turned to a good purpose; and, as the little

anecdote may perhaps furnish some amusement, I will read it to you, if I can speedily lay my hands upon it. So saying, she arose, and, opening a drawer in an Indian cabinet which stood in the room, brought out from several manuscripts *one* to which the date, marked on the cover, enabled her instantly to refer.

“This little volume,” said she, as she turned over the leaves, “contains the journal of a voyage made by me in the East Indies, upon the Ganges, in the cool season of the year 17—, from the higher provinces to Calcutta, and likewise of my return two years afterwards.”

The lady then selecting the passages she intended to lay before the young people, read as follows.——

“*November 18.* Our boats came to anchor at an early hour. It was a beautiful evening, cool and refreshing, inviting us to take the air. We chose a shady path, under a high wood of bamboos, which trees much resemble the tall willows often seen in England by the side of running waters. In one or two places, the long shafts of these lofty trees having fallen across the footway, and resting upon the opposite trees, formed a beautiful canopy over the head of the passenger; the leaves and tender branches, hanging gracefully from the principal stem, being easily agitated by the slightest breath of air.

“As we advanced into the wood, still wandering further and further from the shore, where all was bustle and noise, the scene seemed to acquire new charms. The rustling of the breeze among the long slender branches and polished leaves of the bamboo, the moaning of the ring-dove, together with the distant view of topes of corn-fields and thatched cottages, which, from time to time, we caught through the openings of the wood, excited altogether many delightful ideas, though not unmixed with grief to think that a country, thus beautifully formed by the hand of God, should for so many ages past have been the seat of a false religion, and that generation after generation should have succeeded each other in these sweet regions, uninterrupted polluting themselves with the grossest idolatry, and the most abominable practices.

“Through this forest of bamboo we proceeded, till we

came to a village embosomed in the wood. There we saw many pretty thatched cottages standing in little compounds, or yards, hedged round with a kind of prickly fence, having their mossy roofs overgrown with a certain creeper bearing large gourds, or pumpkins. Passing still forward, we came to a tope of mangoes, inclosed by walls of mud. In the centre of this grove, which, from the thick foliage of the mangoe-tree, was extremely dark, stood the tomb of a supposed Hindoo saint, and near it a large heap, or tumulus, formed of little elephants of clay, which we understood to have been brought thither as offerings to the dead.

“Near this tomb sat an old man of a most disgusting appearance, a votary of the supposed saint, one who lived on the charity of the poor villagers, being considered by them as a person of extraordinary sanctity, although exhibiting in his person the strongest evidences of ignorance and superstition. We endeavoured to enter into conversation with this miserable being ; but he seemed to look upon us with dread and abhorrence. He would answer none of our questions, and appeared only anxious to hinder us from polluting the tomb, or the little elephants of clay, by our unholy touch.

“We stayed in this gloomy grove, till the sudden approach of evening made it necessary for us to hasten back ; there being in this latitude but little twilight.”

The lady of the manor then turning to another part of her little manuscript, made another selection, which she read as follows. —

“*January 14*, (two years after the time before specified,) returning up the Ganges, we stopped early one evening near the house of a pious indigo-planter, for whom we had brought a letter. The house was scarcely half a coss distant from the village near the bamboo grove, in view of the tope and its gloomy tomb. We were kindly received in this house, and before our evening-meal we were taken to walk in the garden, where our Christian friend had a school of Hindoo children assembled under a shed. At the door of this shed sat an old man decently clothed, who made his salam in a manner so marked, that we could not avoid looking at

him with considerable curiosity, insomuch that we presently recollected having seen him before, though we could not call to mind on what occasion.

“On our asking his history, our host informed us, that he was the very old man who formerly lived under the tope, and that he had been converted to Christianity by the labours of a certain missionary who had visited that neighbourhood; in consequence of which, our friend had taken him into his family, in order to protect him from the persecution of his neighbours.

“So interesting an event as the conversion of such a man led me to ask many questions, one of which was concerning the old man’s name. To this our host made the following remarkable answer.—

“‘This old man,’ said he, ‘was formerly known by the name of Rambuksh; but when baptized he became anxious to receive a new name. We told him that the bestowing of a name was no part of the sacrament of baptism; but he replied, “Give me a new name, and one which shall (with the divine help) remind me of my obligations as a Christian.” We therefore complied with his request, admiring the motive from which it proceeded.’”

The lady of the manor then, laying aside her little manuscript, added this remark on the story she had just read.—“It would be well for us,” said she, “if, like this poor heathen, whenever we hear our Christian names, we were to think of the obligations which we were laid under at the period when such names were given us; which obligations you, my dear young people, are now about to ratify before the assembled Church.”

Miss Emmeline here remarked, that she had never before entertained the idea that good thoughts could thus be conveyed to any person’s mind merely by the sound of a name which had no meaning, or at least the meaning of which the owner of the name was not acquainted with.

The lady of the manor answered, that as it is the property of the bee to gather honey from every flower, so should it be the aim and object of a Christian, to render every circumstance of life profitable to edification, according to the injunction of the apostle—*Whether there-*

*fore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Cor. x. 31.)*

The lady of the manor then addressing herself to Miss Louisa, requested her to repeat the answer to the second question in the Catechism, to wit, "Who gave you this name?"

The young lady replied—"My godfathers and my godmothers in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."

"The few lines which you have repeated, my dear young friend," said the lady of the manor, when Miss Louisa ceased to speak, "might afford matter for volumes of explanation. Indeed, there is so much to be said upon them, that I hardly know where or how to begin. I will, however, endeavour, in all my explanations, to keep as close as possible to the order of things suggested by the Church Catechism. But, as the duty of sponsors, and the nature of the sacrament of baptism, will come more fully under view in the course of our examination of this Catechism at another time, when I trust you will be more capable of entering into the subject, I shall leave the discussion of this matter for the present, simply however stating, that it may certainly be proved, not only from experience, but also from Scripture, that the outward and visible signs of the sacrament of baptism are not necessarily accompanied by the inward and spiritual grace; and consequently, that those persons who believe they must needs be saved because they have been baptized, are giving way to a very dangerous error. On this account, I again say, that I am inclined to disapprove the answer which you have just repeated from our Catechism, because it undoubtedly leads to the confirmation of this erroneous opinion. And though, perhaps, some would urge, that this answer might be easily justified, because baptism never can be said to be duly administered, excepting when the inward and spiritual grace attends the outward and visible sign, (and this was no doubt the idea of those holy men who composed this form of words,) nevertheless, as this Catechism is commonly put into the hands of such as are ignorant of spiritual matters, and apt to rest in forms, I again repeat, that I fear much injury has been done by this incautious sentence. And here I

beg you, my young people, carefully to bear in mind, that in order to render a vile condemned sinner and child of wrath ‘a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven,’ something more is necessary than the mere external washing by water in baptism.

“ Having thus, I trust, set your minds right upon this subject, I will proceed, my dear young friends, to explain to you these three things.—First, what is meant by being a member of Christ ;—Secondly, what it is to be made a child of God ;—and Thirdly, what is signified by becoming an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

“ But, in order thoroughly to understand and value the privileges procured for us by the death of Christ, and our spiritual union with him, we must obtain some acquaintance with our state by nature, and be made sensible that we are naturally members of Satan, children of the devil, and heirs of hell.

“ And now,” proceeded the lady of the manor, “ as you have always shewn yourselves pleased with any little narrative which I have thought proper to bring forward, instead of entering into a discussion with you upon these subjects, which might perhaps appear dry and uninteresting, I will, if you please, read a very affecting story which I procured from an old lady of high rank, with whom I became acquainted many years ago, when residing a few months in the ancient city of Canterbury.”

The young ladies were only restrained by politeness from expressing their pleasure on hearing so agreeable a proposal ; nevertheless, smiles and dimples embellished every countenance when the lady of the manor, drawing a small manuscript from her work-box, began to read as follows.—

“ ‘ It is now more than forty years,’ said the old lady before mentioned, ‘ since I went to pay a long visit to the Dowager Lady N——, who, with her servants, resided alone, in an ancient family mansion, in one of the most beautiful parts of the County of Kent.

“ ‘ This mansion, which had been erected in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, stood in a hollow, on the borders of a lake, and inclosed in a well-wooded park ; the trees being arranged, according to the fashion of former days,

in long and majestic avenues, which, stretching in different directions from the house, were terminated by lodges and gateways. These lodges, like the portals of Solomon's Temple, looked towards the four points of the compass, to wit, the east, the west, the north, and the south.

“ ‘ The mansion, which was very large, was furnished altogether after the fashion of elder times, and exhibited, as might be supposed, a variety of objects abounding with entertainment to a young and inquisitive mind. Accordingly, when not engaged with the lady of the mansion, I commonly employed myself among these various grotesque objects; and soon became intimately acquainted with every tapestry hanging, ivory cabinet, embroidered quilt, filagree screen, and painted or sculptured representation of the human face divine scattered throughout the wide halls, galleries, and chambers of this ancient dwelling.

“ ‘ But, among all these curiosities of art, and these representations of the noble, the beautiful, and the brave of past ages, no one object had so much power to fix my attention, and excite my lasting admiration, as a certain family picture on a large scale, which hung in a remote chamber. This picture represented a lady in all the perfection of beauty, holding an infant in her arms, and presenting him to his father, (a young man of a fine appearance,) who was in the act of advancing to receive him; his countenance being lighted up with such an expression of mingled love and joy as is seldom so happily expressed upon canvas.

“ ‘ The figure of the infant,’ proceeded my old friend, ‘ is still impressed upon my memory in coulours so lively, that I seem to behold it now before me. I still can recollect how skilfully the artist had arranged the yellow and silky hair of early infancy, in order to display to the best advantage the polished brow and glossy eyebrow beneath; and how entirely he had preserved that soft and dovelike expression of the eye, which is not seldom to be seen in babyhood, but which is never to be met with in after life, excepting perhaps in those persons who through the influence of grace are brought into that state of which infancy is the lovely and animated emblem. Thus had the art of the painter contrived to commemorate the joy and pride of these two happy parents in their bloom-

ing boy. Yet, as I afterwards found, when made acquainted with the history of this family, could these parents have foreseen what was to be the future fortune of their child, they might reasonably have envied those fathers and mothers whose sad lot it has been to stretch out the tender limbs of their first-born on the cold bed of death, and to impress the parting kiss on the pale brow and dimpled hand of him who had once been the delight of their eyes and the joy of their hearts.

“ My admiration of this beautiful portrait,” continued the old lady, “ was so strongly and constantly excited, that I could not refrain speaking of it to Lady N——, and expressing the extraordinary interest which it had occasioned.

“ Lady N—— replied. “ The picture that has fixed your attention is undoubtedly the finest in the house; and the story attached to it is so curious, that I must not deny you the satisfaction of hearing it. The persons whose portraits are there presented, were known to my family; and every important particular of their lives is so perfectly familiar to me, that, with the assistance of some letters from one of the parties, which I have by me, I shall find it no difficult matter to make you acquainted with their whole disastrous and awful history.”

“ I eagerly,” continued the old lady, “ caught at this proposal; and, being permitted by Lady N——, I failed not to commit the whole to writing.”

### *The History of the noble Altamont.*

“ The noble family of L——,” said the Countess of N——, “ had reached the zenith of their power and splendour during the latter part of the reign of Charles the Second. James Adolphus, who was at that period Earl of L——, was one of the first wits of the day, as well as an able politician, and as perfect a gentleman as the dissipated capital could then boast; for, although the manners of an impure and dissolute society may admit a certain polish sufficient to dazzle the eyes of those who behold them only at a distance, yet truly correct and lovely manners must ever be the result of faultless morals and Christian principles. But, the Earl being not less an infidel in principle than a profligate in morals, he as

frequently laid aside his courtly manners as he did his robes of honour ; making it abundantly manifest, that, as he was capable of rendering himself an acceptable companion to the most refined and elegant characters of the day, so in like manner he could accommodate his conversation, on occasion, to the taste of the lowest and most profane part of mankind.

“ The Earl of L—— married early in life. His lady was of a noble family, an heiress, and a woman of no common beauty, but possessing a haughty and infidel spirit too much resembling that of her husband, whose defects she looked upon with an eye of the greatest indulgence, so long as they did not interfere with her own peculiar humours, or in any degree tend to the abridgment of her satisfactions.

“ Such,” continued Lady N——, “ were the lady and gentleman on whose portraits you have bestowed so large a share of your attention ; and it must be confessed, that, had the qualities of their hearts been answerable to their external perfections, the world could seldom boast of a pair so excellent. The lovely infant, whom you see in the arms of the lady, was their only son, the noble, the misguided, and the guilty youth, whom we will call Altagmont, and whose remarkable history will make up the chief part of what I am about to relate.

“ This boy was still in his cradle, at the period of the death of King Charles the Second ; and, as the face of public affairs then underwent an entire change, the Earl of L—— withdrew from court, with his family, and from that period resided upon his estates, of which he had several in different parts of the kingdom ; this ancient mansion, with its noble park and environs, in which I now dwell, being one of the number.

“ The mode of life, and the state of manners, in the country at that time were very different from what we now witness. Many more servants were then kept in every noble family ; and the line of separation between the superior and the inferior was much broader in those days, than the present state of society and public feeling will admit. In consequence of this, the children of the higher ranks were not only brought up in great pride, but were taught to consider their inferiors as creatures intended to be entirely subservient to their pleasures.

“ The state of literature at that time was also exceedingly low and corrupt, as must appear from a perusal of the fashionable publications of the day. The poets and romance writers of that period were so ambitious of forming themselves upon the model of the ancient heathen, as indiscriminately to copy their perfections and their defects ; in consequence of which, their works were filled with such images of impurity as were a reproach to the age in which they lived. But, monstrous as it may appear, gross and indelicate wit, together with the open contempt of religion and religious characters, were then not only tolerated, but considered as marks of extraordinary gentility.

“ I have before said, that Lord L—— was a wit, as well as an infidel ; and that his lady had no feelings which might induce her to counteract the evil influence of her husband’s principles. It was therefore to be expected, that the utmost moral disorder should pervade the whole of their extensive household, and that their son would of course be trained up in an entire absence of all virtuous principle. This was indeed the case with the youth in question ; and, though a tutor was provided for him in the person of my lord’s domestic chaplain, and although this chaplain was an inoffensive well-meaning man, yet so little authority was given him over his noble pupil, that very little good could be expected to result from his instructions.

“ Thus the early days of this noble youth passed with little profit to himself, his time being divided between the society of his father’s gamekeepers and the conversation of his grooms—with the exception indeed of a few odd hours which were now and then given to his studies ; during which however such a progress was made as plainly proved what his acquisitions might have been under the influence of a stricter discipline.

“ At the accustomed period, he was removed from under the tuition of the chaplain, and entered as a nobleman in the University of Oxford. In this place, being left much to himself, and having a great command of money, his wicked habits became more rooted and diffusive ; notwithstanding which, having a remarkably fine person, an easy and elegant address, together with the faculty of readily adapting his conversation to the taste

and humour of his auditors, his faults were not followed by that disgrace and entire loss of reputation which might have been expected.

“ During the time that Altamont spent at Oxford, there was in the same college a young man descended from the younger branch of a noble family—a youth who had been brought up with the utmost care and tenderness by a widowed mother, in great privacy, and in habits the most pure and simple. It happened, that Altamont, on some occasion which I do not at this moment recollect, was enabled to lay this young man, whose name was Frederick Beauclerk, under an obligation, of which the grateful youth never lost the recollection. And as Altamont, while in the university, was enabled to conceal from young Beauclerk the most atrocious parts of his character, and to gloss over his more venial errors with that peculiar ease, grace, and address, by which, as I have before said, he was distinguished above all his companions, he contrived to retain the affections, and in some degree to acquire the esteem, of this young man, who, though pure and pious, had little knowledge of the world; and who, with respect to religion, had a more correct idea of its duties than of its doctrines.

“ Altamont also felt more for Frederick than for any young man with whom he had ever been acquainted. The unaffected elegance of his manners had first attracted him; while his warm and pure attachment connected with his unfeigned humility were calculated to nourish as much of a sentiment of pure regard as could be supposed to exist in a breast so impure as that of Altamont.

“ Frederick Beauclerk had a sister, who, with all the elegant simplicity of her brother, possessed no common share of personal beauty. Altamont became acquainted with this young lady when paying a visit to his friend during the long vacation which took place a short time before these young men left the university. It happened, that Amelia was precisely the model which Altamont had formed to himself of female loveliness; it will not therefore be wondered at, if she had power (though without design) to fix the regards of this young man so permanently as to induce him to seek her in marriage, and to make her his wife. For, as this young lady was of a noble family, and her fortune by no means contemptible,

no objection was made to this connexion by the Earl of L——; while his lady vainly hoped that marriage would correct all that was amiss in the character of her son—for the repeated and free demands which Altamont had already made on his parents' purse had touched this lady in a part where she was capable of the most lively emotions. Accordingly, the marriage took place; and the young people were established in a country-house, possessed by the Earl, in one of the most beautiful counties of England, and about one hundred miles from the metropolis.

“ And here,” said Lady N——, “ if we could drop our curtain, and close the scene, as is commonly done on the stage when the writer has united his profligate hero with some faultless model of female perfection, all would be well: but truth compels us to proceed, in order to point out the natural and unavoidable consequences of this ill-assorted union.

“ In the sweet retirement of which I speak, while the charms of Amelia were still new, and the bloom of hope had not as yet faded from her cheek, all passed tolerably well; though no doubt, from the very earliest period of their more intimate union, certain notices of the moral depravity of her noble husband must have been given to Amelia: but as youth is unapprehensive, and more especially in those cases where the heart is tenderly attached, doubt and distrust found no easy admission into her bosom.

“ Not many months had elapsed before a promise was given of an increase of their family; and Amelia's health being delicate, it was found necessary that she should cease to accompany her husband in his usual walks and rides. On this occasion, so interesting to every tender and affectionate husband, the first symptoms of unkindness appeared in Altamont. After complaining of the solitude to which he was reduced by the indisposition of his lovely wife, he shortly began to arrange for himself plans of amusement in which she had no part.

“ At first his wanderings from the sphere of duty were less eccentric; but speedily afterwards, giving the rein to his evil inclinations, he plunged again into the same excesses in which he had allowed himself at the university. His absences from home became longer, and were

more frequently repeated; and though his gentle and pious wife always received him with kindness on his return, yet he soon ceased to have pleasure in her company, since her very excellencies served only to reproach him for his neglect and infidelity.

“The occasion however of his son’s birth awakened for a little time his better feelings, and arrested him in the mad career of his ruinous vices. During the short period in which he remained at home after this event, he behaved towards his wife in so affectionate a way as served to cheer her mind with happier prospects. He also bestowed many caresses on his infant son; and more than once expressed a hope that this child might be a better man than his father. But, shortly afterwards, again becoming weary of retirement, he suddenly took leave of his wife and son; and, pretending indispensable business, repaired to town.

“It is not my intention,” said Lady N——, “to enter into a full detail of all the guilty practices of this unhappy young man: suffice it to say, that, soon after his arrival in the capital, he connected himself so closely with wicked associates, and involved himself so deeply in gambling debts, that, in order to disencumber himself of the painful embarrassments occasioned by these imprudences, he allowed himself to be persuaded to accompany a certain young nobleman of his acquaintance to Paris; having previously raised a sum of money from those persons who make it their business to supply young heirs at an enormous interest, in order to enable him to enter upon a new course of folly in the profligate court in which he was about to appear.

“From Boulogne-sur-Mer, and not till he had reached that place, he wrote to his wife. His letter was short; nevertheless, as it contained some expressions of tenderness for herself and her infant, it was long treasured up and remembered by her, being the last token of regard received from him on whom her young affections had been placed.

“From Boulogne, Altamont and his young companion, Lord D——, proceeded to Paris, were they had letters of introduction to the English ambassador; in consequence of which they were presently introduced to the king, and other members of the royal family.

“ From a letter written by this misguided young man,” proceeded Lady N——, “ about the time here referred to, his family became acquainted with certain circumstances relative to his residence in France which they would not otherwise have known; which letter you shall hear, though it is not altogether necessary to this history.

“ ‘ My days,’ wrote this unfortunate man, ‘ glide away in this gay capital in an endless variety of amusements. I find in this place that which effectually cheats me of myself, and banishes those importunate reflections which would intrude themselves when in England. It is impossible to reflect, or to indulge an uneasy thought, in the society of the charming females of this capital. They have the faculty of making all things yield to the impressions they are desirous of effecting. In England, I could be melancholy with the gay, sullen with the good-humoured, and morose with the gentle and amiable: but here it is quite otherwise; the ladies of Paris carry all before them, and make of me what they will. It is certain that the follies they make me commit will not bear reflection; but who reflects in Paris ! ’

“ ‘ I have been at Versailles, and have partaken of all the pleasures of the court. The king was gracious; and I was, of course, in high favour with every one. What a magnificent thing is this palace of Versailles ! What an idea of regal pomp does it excite in every beholder ! where the very force which is put upon nature in its superb gardens fills the mind with high conceptions of the riches and power of those by whom the woods and forests, yea, the very elements, have been made to submit themselves to the caprice of man. For in this place, at the command of his Majesty, a thousand streams of water rush from various points into the mighty reservoirs in which they are collected; whence, bursting forth again from the mouths of lions, dragons, tigers, and crocodiles, of bronze or marble, they rise up in mighty fountains towards the heavens, or gently glide over pebbled channels, or through shadowy bosquets, into the lakes which are seen in the distant perspective. In these gardens are collected all the gods of the pantheon; and, in fact, these venerable personages meet the eye at every turn both within and without the royal habitation.

“ ‘ I never believed that I could have derived so much

benefit from my classical studies as I did on this occasion of my visit to Versailles. Every apartment in the royal suite is denominated after some of the divine personages of antiquity, as well as enriched with their figures and emblems; insomuch, that could an ancient Roman be suddenly raised from his tomb, and brought hither, he would assuredly believe himself on Olympus. Here is the Hall of Plenty, the Hall of Venus, the Hall of Diana, the Hall of Mars, and the Hall of Peace. And in the great gallery, which, by the bye, is the finest thing I ever saw, the late king, Louis the Fourteenth, is represented by various allegorical figures, under which he appropriates to himself the characters and attributes of Deity; and where, among other extravagant actions, we behold him hurling his thunderbolts in the person of Jupiter.

“ ‘ When the court is at Versailles, I am generally with it. In Paris my mornings are commonly spent at the Palais-Royal, and my evenings either at the theatre or in the assemblies of our great ladies. We dance, dress, talk, and play: and thus our time passes.

“ ‘ When I am weary of Paris, and Paris is weary of me, I return home—but till then adieu.’

“ You will perhaps be able to obtain some little idea from this letter,” proceeded Lady N——, “ of the manner in which this young nobleman spent the two first years of his residence abroad: during which time he received many letters from his parents, his wife, and Mrs. Beauclerk, but made no reply to any one of them; not, as he afterwards confessed, that he had actually resolved never to write to them again, nor to see them any more, but because his conscience continually smiting him with his unkindness and disobedience, made it too painful for him to think of those connexions so long and in so feeling a manner as to engage him in writing a letter. He was indeed without excuse for his conduct, though he was too proud to confess himself to blame. His affections were now also diverted into other channels; while the false wit and brilliancy of the French ladies, with whom he daily conversed, had so entirely perverted his taste, that he ceased to recollect with any sort of approbation the delicate and natural charms of his once beloved Amelia.

“ I have before remarked, that this young man was

utterly ignorant of the divine principles of Christianity, having been brought up in practical infidelity respecting revealed religion. But had he been educated in the wilds of Africa among professed heathens, and never seen the Word of God, or heard the name of Christ, these circumstances would have afforded no excuse for his conduct: since in every human breast the judgment and the conscience cannot but plead strongly against such shameful breaches of moral duty as Altamont was guilty of—for, as St. Paul observes, in speaking of the heathen, *When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another.* (Rom. ii. 14, 15.)

“ Notwithstanding however this utter neglect on the part of her husband, his wife still continued to address him by letter, in a manner the most tender, repeatedly inviting him to return, or offering to join him in Paris, promising him that he had nothing to fear from her reproaches, and assuring him that his presence alone would be sufficient to efface the memory of all that was past. Thus she endeavoured to draw him back to his duty by the gentle cords of love: but he cast aside her affectionate communications as things of no value; nor did they produce the slightest impression, till, after having been separated from her for more than a year and half, a letter was put into his hand, announcing the death of his infant son. On this occasion, Altamont experienced some few slight awakenings of contrition and tenderness, and for a moment felt almost inclined to return to England. But these emotions were transitory: he had now become the slave of depraved pleasures, to which he was bound by chains too strong to be broken by his own enfeebled powers. In the mean time Frederick Beauclerk, the brother of his wife, had been making the tour of Europe, in company with his tutor, an elderly clergyman and a truly pious man. He had extended his travels into Greece, and was now returning home through Paris. On his arrival in that capital, he called upon the English ambassador, from whom he heard that Altamont was in the country, being then at Versailles, where the royal

family were engaged in the celebration of some great national event. Frederick Beauclerk expressed a vehement desire to see his old friend, at the same time hinting, that he feared all was not well between him and his sister.

“ Persons in exalted situations of life are generally more cautious in retailing reports relative to private individuals than those of lower condition: for although the great have like passions with other men, yet the constant restraints of polished life, in which they are educated, do undoubtedly accustom them to refrain more generally from that interference in other people’s concerns, which is the frequent occasion of disputes and heartburnings in ordinary life, and which sometimes renders the company of underbred persons extremely irksome to those who have been brought up in more refined society. Agreeably to this remark, the ambassador entered no further into the affairs of Altamont than I have before related, making no remark by which the curiosity of Beauclerk respecting his sister’s present situation could be satisfied; but very obligingly telling him, that, as he was himself going the next day to Versailles, he should have great pleasure in taking him in his train, in order to supply him with an opportunity of seeing his friend, and witnessing a little of the humours of the court.

“ Frederick Beauclerk accepted this obliging offer with eagerness, and immediately returned to his hotel, in order to prepare for his appearance next day in the royal presence.

“ In the mean time, Mr. Osborne, the worthy tutor of young Beauclerk, had received private letters from Mrs. Beauclerk, in which the conduct of Altamont was represented in its true colours. This lady had refrained from addressing her son on this subject, fearing to irritate him, and dreading lest, in his resentment, he should say something to Altamont which might lead to evil consequences. In this letter, Mrs. Beauclerk, after speaking of her daughter’s trials, blamed herself for not having sufficiently studied the character of Altamont before she consented to their marriage. ‘ But I confess not only my weakness, but my sin; I was dazzled by the high birth, the noble prospects, and striking exterior of the man who sought my daughter. I departed from the pure

and simple conduct of a Christian on this occasion; and I take the afflictions which have followed as the punishment of my offence. But Oh, my daughter, my Amelia, how shall I make up to thee the sufferings that have flowed from my negligence!

“The venerable tutor had scarcely concluded the perusal of this letter, when his pupil entered, in a state of stronger excitement than he had ever before observed about him.

“‘I have seen his Excellency,’ said Frederick, ‘and I am going with him to-morrow to Versailles, to see Altamont, who is now there.’

“‘I could wish,’ replied the tutor, ‘that you would give up all thoughts of this visit, Mr. Beauclerk. The court of France is full of dangers to a young man. Remember your Christian profession, and do not throw yourself in the way of temptation.’

“‘But Altamont?’ said Frederick; ‘I must see him! Why has he left my sister? What is he doing here? If I find, Mr. Osborne, if I find that he has injured Amelia,—

“‘If you find that he has injured your sister, Mr. Beauclerk,’ repeated the tutor, interrupting him, ‘what then?—what will you do in that case?’

“Frederick reddened and hesitated.

“‘What will you do?’ repeated Mr. Osborne. ‘Recollect that you are the servant of Him of whom it is written, *Vengeance is mine; I will repay.*’

“‘I will return to my sister, Mr. Osborne,’ said Frederick; ‘I will return to my sister, and be her comforter.’

“‘The Lord assisting you,’ replied the tutor.

“‘But I must see Altamont,’ said Frederick. ‘I must try what the persuasions of a friend will do.’

“‘I dare not advise this interview,’ returned Mr. Osborne; ‘let me see the young man myself; allow me to be the interpreter of your sentiments; recollect that all human wisdom consists in the exclusion of self-dependence.’

“Frederick was silent. His gentle spirit was vehemently agitated; and he withdrew from the presence of his tutor, perhaps to give way in retirement to the expression of his feelings.

“The subject was not renewed until the next morning,

when the young man thus addressed his tutor :—‘ I cannot,’ said he, ‘ overcome my desire of attending the ambassador to Versailles. But yet,’ added he, ‘ if you, Sir, demand this sacrifice of me, I must make it.’

“ Mr. Osborne was silent, and shook his head.

“ ‘ My tutor, my friend, my father,’ continued Frederick, ‘ do not lay your commands upon me in this matter. I have never yet wilfully disobeyed you, and I desire never to do so, nor in any degree to shake off your authority, till you relinquish it in the presence of my mother. What I owe you is past the power of words to describe! I believed myself to be pious, before my acquaintance with you: I was preserved, without doubt, through the course of my youth by a kind Providence from open vice, and enabled to lead a comparatively blameless life. But it was you, my friend, who, through the divine blessing, brought me acquainted with the high and holy doctrines of our blessed religion; it was you who pointed out to me the nature of sin and my need of a Saviour; and who, for the last few years of my life, amid the various scenes which we have visited together, have perseveringly laboured to elucidate and impress these doctrines and principles on my mind. My obligations to you are therefore such as never, never can be repaid; and the duty I owe you is that of a son to the best and wisest of parents. Therefore if you command me not to go to Versailles, I shall certainly submit my will to yours. Nevertheless, I ardently desire to see and converse with Altamont; I feel it a duty to endeavour, at least, to reclaim this friend of my youth, and if possible to lead him back to his country, his parents, and his wife.’

“ Mr. Osborne was silent: scarcely knowing in what manner to proceed. While he still deliberated, Frederick left the room; and the good man withdrew to his apartment, to spend the evening in prayer for his beloved pupil, under strong apprehensions concerning the result of a meeting between the young men.

“ Such,” said Lady N——, “ is the account which Mr. Osborne himself gave of this transaction.

“ At the appointed hour, Frederick Beauclerk, duly equipped for his appearance in the royal presence, joined the train of the ambassador, and accompanied the party to Versailles.

“ Versailles is distant about ten miles from the barriere of Paris; the road lying through woods and along a fine terrace on the banks of the Seine.

“ When arrived at the royal palace, the evening had already closed in, and the court was filled with equipages and companies of the royal guard. When entered within the walls, Frederick Beauclerk followed the suite of the ambassador up an immense staircase into an exceeding long gallery, occupied on each side by the apartments of the principal persons of the court. From this long gallery the party proceeded into the royal apartments, which were all brilliantly illuminated, and furnished with the utmost magnificence.

“ The first of these apartments was for the royal guard, consisting of young noblemen of the first families of the realm. From the guard-chamber the party proceeded into the halls before mentioned by Altamont, where the figures and emblems of the ancient heathen deities were multiplied and arranged with a degree of splendour, which dazzled the eye as much as it shocked the taste of the pious Beauclerk.

“ These apartments led into others, forming a suite of immense extent; many of them being hung with the finest specimens of the tapestry of Gobelin, or otherwise adorned with carvings, gildings, and paintings.

“ The most remote of these apartments opened into a gallery, said to be one of the finest in Europe, being above two hundred feet in length and thirty in breadth, and lighted by seventeen large windows, opposite which immense mirrors reflected and multiplied all the glittering furniture of the gallery. On the present occasion this superb chamber was illuminated by innumerable lamps, which displayed in the strongest point of view the bright and impressive figures painted upon the ceiling.

“ The party advanced along this gallery to the further end, where spacious folding-doors being thrown open, displayed another grand apartment, in which the ladies of the court were assembled in the presence of their queen, none of them being seated but those whose proximity to princely rank allowed them that privilege.

“ It was not permitted to Frederick, or others of the suite of the ambassador, to enter this apartment: they

therefore remained in the gallery, while his Excellency went forward into the royal presence.

“ Frederick Beauclerk being thus left by the ambassador, and being at the same time a stranger to those about him, had full leisure to contemplate the surrounding objects, and to meditate upon the motives which had impelled him to seek an interview with Altamont in such a scene as that before him.

“ For a few moments, the blaze of innumerable lights in all directions, the sound of a remote band of music, the various resplendent figures passing and repassing before him, every object being doubled upon his sight by the vast mirrors with which the gallery was enriched, together with the thousand old and new ideas associated with the place which crowded upon his mind—all this prevented an orderly arrangement of his thoughts, and occasioned a sort of temporary delirium. The mind of Frederick Beauclerk, however, by the divine blessing, had for a considerable time been brought under the general control of truth and reason; in consequence of which, he was presently enabled to divest the present scene of its adventitious ornaments, and to consider it with nearly the same feelings as those with which he was afterwards accustomed to meditate upon it, when certain unhappy circumstances had left him little else to do than to contemplate the past and prepare for the future. Many sentences of Holy Writ (remembered often before, but felt particularly now) came at this time with force to his mind—passages in which the state of monarchs on earth, and the various circumstances of royal life, are set forth in their truest colours, by him who is the Creator of kings, and in a manner from which even kings themselves, if so disposed, might draw instructions calculated to make them wise unto salvation.

“ While the mind of Beauclerk was thus occupied, his eyes were frequently bent towards the state-apartment, near the doors of which he was standing. The cupola of this apartment was painted in the brightest colours, representing the Genius of France, seated in a car on an azure sphere supported by a cloud, and crowned with glory; while multitudes of allegorical personages, among which appeared Love, Peace, and Pleasure, were grouped around the principal figure.

“The pious mind of this young man was again hurt at these repeated allusions to mythological subjects in the palace of a king calling himself Christian; while the ideas which these figures suggested were such, that, upon turning his eyes from the ceiling to the lower parts of the room, he less wondered than he should otherwise have done at the air of levity and vanity which shed itself over the whole assemblage of those courtly dames who filled the royal apartment.

“In the centre of these, on a magnificent sofa, sat the ladies of the royal family; their right and left being occupied by such as held the privileged rank of duchesses, who alone are permitted to sit in the presence of the queen. The rest were standing in groups, in different parts of the apartment. The dresses of this noble assembly sparkled with gold and silver, while their necks and arms were adorned with jewels. There were also present some gentlemen; but the king himself had not yet arrived.

“While Frederick was looking intently upon this royal and noble company, a murmur of voices running along the gallery reached his ear, when turning hastily round, he was made to understand that his Majesty was approaching. Presently the extensive door-ways at the further end of the gallery began to fill, upon which those within retreated to the right and the left. The king himself soon appeared: his air was majestic, and royalty sat upon his brow. He was followed by a number of gentlemen superbly dressed; among whom Frederick soon distinguished the husband of his sister, his former companion and friend, the person for whose sake he had accepted this invitation to Versailles, and the man whom he had so earnestly desired to see.

“The king drew near; but Beauclerk ceased to behold him. He had no longer any eyes but for Altamont, who, advancing in the royal train, excelled all those by whom he was accompanied in the manly elegance of his person, as well as in his noble, but unstudied, deportment. As the king approached along the gallery, the figure of Altamont became more conspicuous. The glow of conscious superiority and self-satisfaction flushed his cheeks; his fine hair was gracefully disposed, so as to expose to view his fair and spacious forehead, and attached behind with a knot of ribbon: his dress was

remarkably splendid ; a variety of the richest perfumes exhaled from his person ; and a glittering sword hung by his side. The king passed on, and Altamont followed ; but being engaged in conversation with one who walked by his side, he did not observe Beauclerk, until the king having entered the queen's apartment, the latter took occasion to step forward, and laying his hand upon his arm, cried out, 'What, Altamont, have you forgotten me ?'

"At the sound of Frederick's voice, Altamont turned hastily round, and starting, recoiled a few steps, as if he had beheld a serpent.

"'Have you forgotten me, Altamont ?' repeated Frederick, astonished at this movement of his former friend ; 'you perhaps did not expect to see me here ?'

"'I certainly did not,' replied the other. 'I thought you were in Italy.'

"'Or perhaps you hoped I was got back to England,' returned the other, flushing high with a resentment he had no power at that moment to control, 'that I had hastened home to comfort and protect your wife.'

"'This is neither a time nor place for the discussion of these private matters,' returned Altamont.

"'Every time, and every place,' retorted Frederick Beauclerk, 'may serve a brother to plead the cause of an injured sister.'

"'Injured !' repeated Altamont ; 'and is it to you that I must give an account of my actions ?'

"'Yes,' returned the other, 'it is to me that you must account for your desertion of Amelia.'

"'I am ready then,' replied Altamont, haughtily, 'to give you such account at any time and place you may appoint. But what man, excepting a coward,' added he, 'would endeavour to make the world a party in his private quarrels ? Meet me to-morrow at sunrise, in the forest of St. Germaine, where I go to hunt with his Majesty, and you shall have every satisfaction you may desire.' Thus speaking, he proceeded into the queen's apartment, leaving Frederick to make such reflections on the precipitancy and rashness of his conduct, and on the insults to which he had exposed himself, as one might be supposed to make, who, together with a high sense of honour, was fully impressed with the Christian duty of forgiving injuries.

“ Short as this conversation was between Altamont and Frederick, it did not pass unobserved by some of those many busy persons who are to be found in every public assembly; and Altamont was more than once addressed to this purpose by certain of his pretended friends:—‘ And who, Monsieur, was that little gentleman who dared to address you in a manner so free as that we have witnessed, in the presence of his Majesty? and to call you to account, as we understood, for your conduct to his sister?’

“ On these occasions, Altamont gave himself sundry airs of insolence and independence, using some contemptuous words respecting Frederick Beauclerk, and throwing out certain expressions of defiance, which were commended by those about him as being perfectly proper and suitable to his character as a gentleman.

“ All these circumstances, which I have taken some time to relate as they passed in the royal apartments at Versailles, occasioned no manner of derangement in the amusements of the evening. Every thing passed on in the usual routine: Altamont was as gay, as brilliant, and as much admired, as ever; and if he had any feelings of remorse or regret, they were not sufficiently strong to affect his outward appearance in the smallest degree.

“ Not such was the case of the warm-hearted and affectionate Beauclerk. It is difficult to convey an idea of the conflict which he endured at the moment when Altamont turned his back upon him. His breast was at that instant agitated with a variety of strong emotions: offended friendship, resentment, and pity, all contended within him. But, among all these painful feelings, that of self-reproach was abundantly the keenest.—‘ I have,’ thought he, ‘ drawn upon myself the resentment of Altamont by my hasty and injudicious address at such a moment and in such a place. I came to sooth the husband of my sister, and if possible to lead him back to his duty by the pleadings of friendship: but, instead of this, I have injured the cause of my Amelia, disgraced my character as a Christian, and provoked my brother-in-law to insult me publicly: and all this by my precipitancy—a precipitancy too against which I was warned by my tutor. Oh, Altamont! Oh, Amelia!’ he inwardly exclaimed; ‘ I have injured you, I fear, past repair.’

“Thoughts of this description so entirely occupied the mind of Frederick Beauclerk from the moment of his short interview with Altamont, that the courtly pageant which passed before him during the rest of the evening had no power to arrest his attention for a moment; and he impatiently waited an opportunity to disengage himself from the suite of his Excellency the ambassador, for the purpose of repairing to a lodging which his servant had prepared for him in the town. There, having laid aside his court-dress, and assumed a more ordinary habit, he waited till the first dawn of day; when mounting his horse, and desiring that none should attend him, he rode directly towards St. Germaine.

“The road from Versailles to St. Germaine is for the most part straight as an arrow, and inclosed between rows of trees. Such a road could not easily be missed, even by one who, like Frederick, was an entire stranger to the country, and in a state of the utmost mental agitation: accordingly, he arrived at St. Germaine about sunrise. Having delivered his horse to the care of the first innkeeper whom he could find, he proceeded through that part of the town which led to the palace and the forest; which last is at a small distance from the former.

“The palace of St. Germaine,” remarked Lady N—— in this part of her narrative, “is the place in which James the Second, of England, resided for some years before his death, and wherein he died. It is of an irregular form, built round a court, ornamented with towers and cupolas at each corner. It is an extensive edifice, containing three stories; the two lower stories projecting considerably beyond the upper one, and having an open gallery above them surmounted by an iron rail running round the whole circumference of the building. Up to the level of this gallery, the palace is of stone; above which it is curiously formed of small bricks and plaster of a dark lead colour. The windows of the palace are numerous, but small. In one of the fronts is a large clock; and on the roof of the palace is a wooden cupola containing a bell. The whole appearance of this royal fabric is gloomy though majestic, calculated to carry the mind back to other times and days long past. Two of its fronts face an area of the street; the third,

a garden; and the fourth, a beautiful lawn scattered over with Linden trees.

“ The high towers of the palace cast a long shade towards the west, the sun being yet upon the verge of the horizon when Frederick Beauclerk approached it. The young man passed round the two fronts of the edifice towards the street, and entered by an iron gate upon the lawn before mentioned. Through this lawn he passed on, till he came out on a beautiful terrace, whence the river Seine appeared winding through a rich valley till it lost itself in a long range of woods in the distance. From this terrace the noble arches which support the aqueduct on the heights of Marly may be seen rising above the town on one side, while the distant towers of St. Dennis, with the hills about Paris and St. Cloud, are distinctly visible on the other.

“ But the unhappy young man of whom we are speaking,” proceeded Lady N——, “ had little leisure to contemplate these beauties. His mind was occupied on other subjects: and no sooner did he find himself alone in this solitary scene, than he solemnly and seriously devoted himself anew to the Father of mercies, humbly imploring the divine assistance and direction, and earnestly soliciting such a degree of grace as might thence-forward lead him to renounce all dependence upon self.

“ While thus engaged, he passed along the terrace till he came within view of a stone gateway opening into the forest. Having passed this gateway, he speedily found himself at the entrance of the wood; whence several roads branched off, and, winding away, presently lost themselves among the trees. There, while considering through which of these paths he should direct his steps, his ears were saluted by the sound of horns; presently after which several men on horseback appeared in the garb of huntsmen, who rode towards him, and passed on, being followed by many dogs. These being nearly out of sight, a French lacquey, clothed also in green, came up to him, and having enquired his name, said, ‘ Monsieur, you are the gentleman then to whom I have an errand. My master awaits you in a retired part of the wood not far distant.’

“ ‘ Lead the way,’ said Beauclerk, ‘ and I will follow. And now,’ added he to himself, ‘ under the influence of

divine grace, I will endeavour to make some reparation for the offence of which I was last night guilty.'

"The lacquey, in obedience to the request of Frederick, immediately shot into the wood through a winding and obscure path, and having proceeded a considerable time, making his way through brakes and bushes still wet with dew, he conducted Beauclerk at length into a more open part of the forest, where a tree having been felled lay across the glade. There Frederick saw several young men assembled in the costume of the royal hunt; among whom he soon discerned Altamont, who was leaning carelessly against the trunk of the tree before mentioned, and gaily conversing with his companions.

"At sight of Beauclerk he started up from his lounging attitude and stood erect, looking fixedly and insolently upon him as he approached, and scarcely deigning to notice his salutation. The countenance of Altamont bore strong evidence of the disorders of the past night, and it was apparent from the wildness of his eye that he was still under the influence of intoxication.

"'Well, Sir,' said he, addressing Beauclerk, who was now come up close to him, 'what is your business with me? I am now at leisure to give you a hearing.'

"'My first business,' replied Frederick, calmly, 'is to apologize to you, my Lord, for having yesterday been led by the ardour of my feelings to intrude myself upon you at an inconvenient moment. I am sensible of having acted most improperly in so doing, and not less so in having spoken with so much heat; and I take this the first opportunity which presents itself of making my apology.'

"As the Christian motives which induced Frederick Beauclerk to use the words of humility and apology where those only of defiance were expected, were totally inexplicable to Altamont and his companions, they failed not to attribute his conduct at this crisis to cowardice: insomuch that Altamont drew up his lip with an expression of contempt and scorn, while the young Frenchmen murmured the word 'poltroon' in whispers sufficiently audible to be heard by every individual present. Notwithstanding which provocations, Frederick was enabled to proceed with composure, and to address his brother with an air of unfeigned gentleness—reminding him of

their former friendship, and their near connexion ; and earnestly requesting a private interview.

“ ‘ Is not the present place sufficiently private, Sir ? ’ returned Altamont.

“ Frederick made no reply ; but looked at the two young noblemen who stood by.

“ ‘ These gentlemen are my friends,’ said Altamont. ‘ There is nothing you can say which they may not hear.’

“ ‘ If it must be so,’ replied Frederick, ‘ I must then submit to this intrusion, and avail myself of the present opportunity to intreat you, my brother, to return to your country, and to that wife who no doubt perpetually mourns the absence of her husband.’

“ Altamont replied, with scorn, that he would not allow any interference between himself and his wife.

“ Frederick pleaded the privilege of a brother.

“ Altamont answered, that no brother, or other relation, should interfere in his affairs, unless he could prove himself his superior in strength of arm ; and thus saying, he laid his hand upon his sword, (for at that period, in France, no gentleman appeared abroad without a sword,) with an air of defiance and insolence, which could not but excite the applause of the by-standers.

“ Frederick calmly observed, that he came to reason with a brother, and not to contend with an enemy.

“ Altamont told him, that fine-turned periods were but the subterfuge of cowardice, and that religion was a very convenient protection for a man who dared not fight.

“ Frederick flushed high upon this, and his hand for a moment rested upon the hilt of his sword ; but recollecting himself, he removed it.

“ He had now further insults to bear from Altamont and his companions : the end of which was, that he grew warm, and, being thrown off his guard, made use of some expressions which so irritated Altamont, that he angrily drew his sword, compelling him in self-defence to do the same ; though his Christian principles still so strongly prevailed, that his weapon was used only in protecting himself, without the least attempt to injure his adversary. The unequal contest however was soon decided ; and Altamont had the momentary satisfaction (if satisfaction it were) of seeing his meek and unoffending foe extended bleeding upon the ground.

“ On this occasion, however, Altamont shewed that he was not past feeling : for no sooner did he behold his early companion bleeding, and apparently dying, than, being sobered instantly by the sight, he threw himself on his knees by his side, endeavouring to stop the blood, and dismissing his companions in all directions for assistance. Feeling however some degree of alarm for his personal safety in case of Frederick’s death, as soon as he heard the steps of his returning servants, he arose, and leaving Beauclerk senseless upon the ground, he plunged into the thickest part of the wood ; intending there to remain concealed till he should hear the end of this disastrous affair.

“ In the mean time, Mr. Osborne (who had been extremely uneasy ever since the departure of his pupil) found his mind at length so violently agitated as obliged him to hire a carriage and follow Frederick to Versailles ; where finding his servant, and being informed by him that his master had gone in the direction of St. Germaine, he followed him thither, tracing him, with great difficulty and by dint of many enquiries, to the very forest ; where meeting with the lacquey, who was at that moment returning with a surgeon whom he had brought from the town, he arrived in company of these persons at the spot where his beloved pupil lay stretched upon the bare earth fainting and covered with blood.

“ The wound however having been examined and bound up, and certain cordials administered, it was found that there existed no danger of immediate death. This became a source of unspeakable comfort to Mr. Osborne, who was extremely anxious that some interval for reflection might be allowed to his amiable pupil, and that he might not be hurried away into the eternal world immediately from scenes in which his passions had been vehemently excited. The good man also blamed himself beyond measure for not having used all his influence to restrain his pupil from tempting those dangers to which he had so rashly exposed himself ; though he had been far from looking forward to a catastrophe so speedy and dreadful as that which he was here called to witness. But regrets, and tears, and anguish, were now utterly in vain.

“ The unfortunate young man was lifted gently from

the cold ground, and carried to the town; where lodgings being procured, he was immediately put to bed, and every assistance furnished which might administer either to his bodily ease or his spiritual consolation.

“ Although the wound given by Altamont was the ultimate cause of the death of Frederick Beauclerk, yet his life was protracted for more than twelye months; during which time he was enabled to give a full and accurate account of his visit to Versailles, and the events which followed. He attributed his misfortune to self-presumption in supposing himself able to endure trials to which he was not called: and being thus humbled and self-abased through the influence of the Holy Spirit, he was favoured with the most clear and consolatory views of redeeming love. Before his death, he expressed himself as having heartily forgiven the man by whom he had been thus cruelly injured; thanked his tutor for his paternal kindness; prayed for the peace of his afflicted sister; and in this frame of mind yielded up his life into the hands of the great Father of spirits. His remains were committed to the dust near the place in which he died.

“ But the disasters of this unfortunate family (unfortunate as it respects this world and its concerns, though, we trust, highly favoured and peculiarly blessed with respect to their spiritual interests) did not end with the death of Frederick. The dreadful event of her brother dying by her husband’s hands was related to Amelia: and her cup of woe being thus filled up, she shortly afterwards fell into a disorder which terminated her life.

“ I forgot to mention in its proper place, that Mrs. Beauclerk had attended her son in France; whence she scarcely returned in time to watch the progress of that disease which speedily brought her daughter to the grave. Thus this afflicted parent proved the dreadful effects of that departure from simple Christian principles, which she had candidly avowed in her letter to Mr. Osborne.

“ Amelia was buried in a vault with her infant in the parish-church belonging to the house in which she had resided ever since her marriage; the church itself being situated in a retired part of the pleasure-grounds, encompassed with forest-trees of magnificent growth.

“ To this shadowy retreat the afflicted mother, who had taken a small house in the village after the death of her children, very frequently repaired; having caused a marble monument to be erected in the church to the memory of her daughter and her infant, presenting figures as large as life, correctly copied from a portrait in which the mother was drawn looking down upon her lovely infant who lay sleeping on her breast. Certain impressive texts of Scripture descriptive of the hopes of the departed were inscribed beneath the figures, with the name, the age, and the day of the departure of each: and at the bottom were placed these words—

“ *La notre Amelie.*”

“ The name, age, and day of the death of Frederick Beauclerk were also engraven on a tablet in a part of this monument, together with the place of his sepulture; but without any reference to the circumstances of his death.

“ In the mean time, Altamont, the author of all these complicated woes, pursued his mad career in different cities of Europe, to which he successively repaired after his fatal rencontre in the forest of St. Germaine. We do not presume to say, that he felt no remorse for the injuries which he had inflicted, or that the memory of those amiable persons whose deaths he had undoubtedly occasioned did not sometimes embitter his gayest hours—certain however it is, that, whatever he might feel, his conduct was not at all affected by those feelings, but that he continued to trouble society by his thoughtless and profligate behaviour, till being involved in debts on all sides, and not knowing where to obtain further supplies, he heard with no small satisfaction the report of his father’s death; upon which he hastened home to secure his inheritance.

“ Being arrived in England, where he appeared as the head of an ancient and respectable family, and where he was happily separated from some of his worst connexions, Altamont conducted himself for a few months in such a manner as inclined his friends to hope that a happy change had been effected in his sentiments. And here I would remark, that on this occasion his worldly acquaintance were very probably led to hazard many

wise conjectures on the subject of his apparent amendment, imagining, as irreligious people often do, that repentance would come of course with years and experience—it being the common opinion of strangers to religion, that a man may and must repent whenever he is made to see and feel the impropriety of his conduct. And perhaps if we consider repentance to consist merely of that regret which arises in the mind from having done something which a man ought not to do—a feeling which generally proceeds either from the dread of punishment or of some other inconvenience to which his misconduct may expose him—such a repentance may indeed be produced by ordinary motives, and a man may in this sense be considered as able to repent whenever he may find it convenient and reasonable so to do. But *that repentance* which is unto life, whereby a sinner is made to see and feel the burden of his sin, being grieved and humbled before God on account of it, not so much for the punishment to which it has made him liable, as because thereby the divine law has been violated, the Lord himself dishonoured and offended, and his own soul polluted and defiled—this kind of repentance depends not upon a man's own exertions, but is an unmerited grace freely bestowed, and a divine work wrought upon him by the Spirit of God. They, therefore, who suppose that they may repent at any time, are egregiously mistaken, and *that* in a point of the highest importance to their everlasting welfare. But to return to my history.

“As I have before said,” continued Lady N——, “Altamont conducted himself with so much decorum during the first few months of his residence in England, that the most pleasing expectations were entertained by his mother, who was still living, as well as by several others of his friends, that he would become a totally altered character. But after a while, becoming weary of his new honours and possessions in the country, he removed to town; where, to shorten my story, he again entered into bad company of both sexes, by which means his vast property was speedily so much injured, as induced him to have recourse to gambling in order to repair it.

“At length, after a long course of various fortune, the wild and wicked career of this young man was arrested by a quarrel with a young nobleman in a gambling-house,

which was desperately terminated by Altamont himself, who, in the height of an ungovernable passion, drew his sword, and stabbed his adversary to the heart.

“ Immediately after having committed this dreadful action, he made his escape through an open window into a private street; and having eluded his pursuers, he arrived in disguise at the house in which his beloved wife had lived and died, trusting that he might confide in the fidelity of two old servants who kept the mansion, which had been forsaken ever since the death of its late noble and unfortunate occupant. He knocked at the door at a late hour, and was received in the most respectful manner by his two dependents, who, on hearing the statement of his distressing case, very warmly engaged to use every possible means for his concealment—and herein for some time they succeeded, although many persons were dispersed in different directions to apprehend this unhappy man, for the purpose of bringing him to justice.

“ At length, however, these officers of justice arrived in the very place where the miserable Altamont was concealed; and entering his house, the wretched man with some difficulty escaped their observation by flying into the shrubbery, from whence he made his way into the church by a small door which he contrived to burst open and fasten after him.

“ This happened just at the going down of the sun, when its last rays, penetrating the branches of the surrounding trees, glanced obliquely into the church, and rested upon the monument of Amelia. As Altamont, after fastening the door, advanced into the chancel, where the monument was situated, unconscious of what was next to meet his eye—at sight of the marble figures he started and stood still. In an instant recognizing the lovely features of his late wife, he gazed for a moment with a feeling of sudden and newly awakened emotion on this silent representation of one who was once the object of his tenderest affection. Then dropping his regards, his eyes fell upon the figure of the sleeping infant: the beauty of the child was not less remarkable than that of the mother, and the dimpled figure wanted nothing but life and colour to render it inexpressibly attractive. The eye of Altamont fell still lower; first

upon the passages of Scripture, and then upon the last pathetic expression—

“ *La notre Amelie.*”

Unable to bear this, he turned away, exclaiming in an agony—‘ Oh, that I had never, never seen that sun, whose brilliant beams shine on this spot but to augment and mock my woe ! Oh, that I had never been born !’ Thus exclaiming, he quitted the church, resolving for a moment to deliver himself up to his pursuers. But the dread of public shame again taking possession of his mind, he retreated into the thickest part of the woods. Whence, being favoured by the increasing gloom of the evening, he crossed over the country, and walking all night escaped to a sea-port in the north. There, however, believing himself out of the reach of danger, and consequently becoming less careful about concealment, he was recognized, seized, and delivered over to the officers of justice, at the moment when embarking for a foreign country.

“ It was during the solitude of this night,” proceeded the Lady N——, “ after his dreadful visit to the church, that Altamont first experienced any thing like proper feeling respecting his past conduct. To use his own words : ‘ I was that night like a man just awaking from a long fit of delirium or intoxication, and suddenly finding himself surrounded by the wreck of all that was once dear and precious to him destroyed by his own hand in the paroxysms of his madness. Through the reflections which that memorable night urged upon me, my sense of guilt was every moment rendered more intense ; till my feelings became so intolerable, that, had I not been restrained by the fear of something still more terrible beyond the grave, I should certainly at that time have put a period to my life.’

“ In this happy country,” continued Lady N——, “ nobility is no protection against the strong arm of the law ; but the most dignified criminal is as liable to punishment as those of the lowest rank. Altamont was apprehended, and shortly committed to the confinement of a solitary cell, there to remain until his trial. His mother and other friends indeed obtained permission to supply him with some few conveniences and comforts in

his gloomy prison, which could not have been extended to a poorer man: nevertheless, the law had its course, and this wretched man was condemned to many hours each day of darkness and solitude, which were rendered inexpressibly dreadful to him by the remembrance of a life full of crime together with a horrible presentiment of all the future consequences of his guilt.

“And now,” said Lady N——, “I am come to what I consider the most interesting period in the life of this hitherto miserable young man. I am come to that part of his history which is indescribably precious, as affording the most remarkable display I have ever met with of the power of religion in restoring peace to the most wretched, purity to the most polluted, and honour to the most degraded of mankind.

“It was some weeks after this wretched man had been committed to prison, as he sat one night by the light of a small lamp at the foot of his bed, meditating even to madness upon the distressing situation into which he had brought himself by his crimes—when suddenly the bolts by which his door was fastened on the outside were drawn back, the lock was turned, and at the same moment a venerable clergyman entered the cell, who, respectfully approaching, addressed him to the following purpose.—

“‘My name, my Lord, is Osborne. You may have heard of me, although I have hitherto been personally unknown to you. I have obtained admittance here, in order, with the divine permission, to point out to you that consolation which is provided for all who are willing to receive it.’

“‘Osborne!’ repeated Altamont; ‘I recollect the name; and if you, Sir, are the man I take you for, you ought to hate me.’

“‘You have injured me, it is true,’ said Mr. Osborne. ‘But so far am I from hating you, that I do most sincerely sympathize with you, and am anxious to administer to you every consolation in my power, if you are not unwilling to accept my services.’

“‘You can have no possible motive but kindness,’ returned Altamont with a sigh, ‘in visiting such a one as myself in such a place as this; and I am in consequence obliged to you:—notwithstanding which,’ added

he with a bitter smile, 'when you speak of administering comfort to a man in my condition, I must either believe that you are sporting with me, or that you suppose yourself to be endowed with supernatural powers.'

"' My Lord,' said Mr. Osborne, 'do you suppose me capable of sporting with your feelings?—the feelings of a man in your situation?'

"' No,' said Altamont, 'I cannot suppose it. But,' added he, 'with respect to the comfort you promise me, may I be allowed to ask you the following questions—Can you recal the dead to life?—can you give me back my wife, my friend, my child?—can you restore my polluted honours, and my unsullied fame? If you can do all this, Mr. Osborne, you may then talk to me of consolation; and I will listen to you with delight.'

"' It would be presumptuous in me, my Lord, in the highest degree presumptuous,' said Mr. Osborne, 'to say that I can do any thing for you in my own proper strength; and yet, if the Almighty would dispose you to hearken to me, I should not despair of pointing out the means of restoring unto you tenfold all that you have lost.'

"' I presume,' replied Altamont, 'that you have some fanciful meaning lying hid under these encouraging promises. Many well-meaning persons, I believe, are enabled to draw comfort from these mystical subjects. But as far as I am concerned, I have little opinion of religion, or what it can do for me. At any rate,' he added with a smothered sigh, 'it is now too late, Mr. Osborne, for me to think of these things: my state is decided; and I must bear it with what heart I may.'

"' How, my Lord,' said Mr. Osborne, 'how can it be too late? Does the sick man say, I have no need of a physician; it is too late; do not call him?'

"' The *sick* man, Mr. Osborne!' repeated Altamont; 'compare me rather to the *dying* man. My days are numbered; there is no hope left for me.' Here the unhappy young man fixed his eyes on the pavement of his cell; and, folding his arms, remained for a while in the attitude of deep despair.

"' But why should you count yourself past hope, my Lord?' said Mr. Osborne. 'Are you not still in the land of prayer and repentance?'

"' Alas!' said Altamont, shuddering, 'you do not

consider my state. Have you forgotten the forest of St. Germaine? Have you forgotten Amelia? I have been an incorrigible offender; a man of blood. I know that I have so daringly and repeatedly provoked God, that there is no longer any mercy for me. If I could but hope that I should cease to *be* after death, then, then, indeed, I might be able to look forward to the end of life with resignation.'

"'But, my Lord,' said Mr. Osborne, 'I am not aware of any passage in Scripture where it is signified that a man's sins unfit him for salvation. On the contrary, the Christian religion is adapted to the state of sinners, yea, and to their state only; nor can it possibly be serviceable to characters of any other description.'

"'Allowing it to be so,' said Altamont, 'and that many sinners have been saved by it, yet it never can have been intended for such as I am.'

"'On what account?' replied Mr. Osborne.

"'On account of my aggravated offences,' returned Altamont, gravely, and in accents of fixed dejection. 'I have considered the matter deeply, Mr. Osborne. A man in my situation has many hours for reflection. I have seen things in a very different light since I have been in this place, and I have been made to know and feel that my faults are past forgiveness.'

"'Nevertheless,' said Mr. Osborne, 'you allow that the Christian religion is adapted to the circumstances of sinners in general.'

"'I do,' said Altamont.

"'The point then on which we appear to differ,' continued Mr. Osborne, 'is this; namely, what sort of sinners may be benefited by this religion? You seem to think that the Christian religion may assist slight offenders; and I am well assured that it extends to all cases. It is here, my Lord, that we differ; and so important is the point in dispute between us, that I may venture to affirm, that the man who entertains such an opinion as you have just expressed, is not a Christian at all.'

"'I am not an infidel,' replied Altamont, 'although I have no clear or correct notions upon the subject of religion, and though I believe myself to be beyond the reach of any thing it can do for me.'

“ ‘ You have fallen into two important errors,’ returned Mr. Osborne; ‘ and it is absolutely necessary that you should be set right on these points, in order to your entertaining any reasonable hope of being benefited by religion.

“ ‘ The first of these is the distinction which you make between great and little sins—a distinction not authorized by Scripture, which expressly affirms, that *he who offends in one point is guilty of all*. I do not mean hereby to hint that a man does not contract a heavier load of guilt by repeated and atrocious crimes than he whose faults are less injurious to society: but I argue that in the eyes of a pure and holy God the slightest breach of the divine law brings in the offender as guilty of death; and that consequently such a person stands condemned, and is to all intents and purposes as utterly lost and undone as the worst of criminals.

“ ‘ A second error into which you have fallen,’ continued Mr. Osborne, ‘ is this: you have miscalculated the immense price paid for souls, and are consequently unaware of this glorious truth, that heavy as your sins may be, the ransom paid for your redemption is infinitely greater than they are, yea in the same degree that the blood of Christ is more precious and costly than the life of any individual among men. Take your Bible, my Lord, and seek the teaching of the Spirit. Under his influence study the character, the dignity, the high descent, the godlike attributes, the divine purity, and the almighty power of the Saviour, till you are constrained to doubt no longer of his ability to save you, though your sins are confessedly of the deepest and darkest dye.’

“ Altamont was silent, and Mr. Osborne thus proceeded—‘ It is for want of such views of the Saviour, that the sinner is often reduced to despair, when, overwhelmed with a view of his sins, he imagines that their magnitude and multitude place him beyond the reach of hope. Let us suppose, my Lord, that the king’s son should now come forward, offering to stand in your place, and to bear your punishment, in order to procure your enlargement: and let us further suppose that the assembled legislative powers of the country were to accept the offer, and permit him to undergo that punishment. If

after the conclusion of such a transaction, you were required to stand forth and plead your cause; I ask, on what ground would you urge your claim to a free pardon? Would you rest your hope upon such an extenuation of your offences as you might be able to bring forward; or upon the voluntary sufferings of him who had paid the penalty incurred by your transgressions?"

" 'Undoubtedly,' said Altamont, looking up, 'upon the latter plea.'

" 'Your concern then,' said Mr. Osborne, 'is to look to the merits and death of your Saviour, and to plead these as the ground of your salvation. And in proportion as your views of the Redeemer's merits become more distinct and clear, your confidence in his power to save you will increase; till, through the divine help, you be brought to see and feel this consolatory truth, that, deplorable as your situation is, and flagrant as your offences have been, your case is not yet past hope.'

" Altamont again looked up, and said, ' You are a good man, Mr. Osborne; you would not come hither to deceive me: do you then seriously think that there remains any ground of hope for me?'

" 'I do,' said Mr. Osborne: 'otherwise, I had spared myself the anguish of witnessing your present circumstances. But though I hold out hope to you, considering the state of despair in which I found you as calculated to ensure your everlasting destruction, yet I dare not conceal, that I look upon your past character and conduct with horror: to which I will add, that you must be brought to an infinitely deeper sense of sin than you now experience, before I presume to apply the consolations of religion to your case any further than I have already done.' Thus speaking, the old gentleman, who had evidently been much agitated during the whole of this conversation, arose, and took his leave, promising to repeat his visit on the morrow.

" The next day, about the same hour, Mr. Osborne again procured admittance to Altamont; but at first saw nothing in the manner of the young man to encourage him, any further than a faint expression of pleasure at his re-appearance.

" ' You are come again to the abodes of misery, Mr.

Osborne,' said Altamont. 'I thank you for your kindness: I hardly dared to expect it.'

"'Have you considered what I yesterday laid before you?' said Mr. Osborne.

"'I have,' said Altamont. 'But my mind is still perplexed, and lost in wonder. Where have I been till now? I have lived like one in a dream; or as one whose senses were bound up under a spell. What have I been pursuing through life? What is it which has absorbed all my faculties, employed my thoughts, and allured my affections? What has hitherto hindered my entertaining these views of my God and my Redeemer, which now seem to break in upon me as light on midnight darkness?'

"'What has hindered you?' replied Mr. Osborne; 'what but sin?—sin, which darkens the mind, perverts the faculties, and corrupts the whole man.'

"Mr. Osborne then entered into a discourse of considerable length, upon the nature of sin, and the change which took place in the human disposition and character at the fall. First he took a view of man, as he was when newly created, and before he had undergone the dreadful change effected by sin.

"'The body of man was at that time, no doubt,' said he, 'exceedingly perfect and beautiful. He was then an upright, holy, happy creature, unacquainted with evil, holding uninterrupted communion with his Maker, to whom he looked up with those feelings of ineffable love and sweet dependence, with which an infant regards its tender mother. All the thoughts of his mind whether waking or sleeping, and all the desires of his soul, were then unpolluted, and wholly conformed to the will of his Creator. His understanding was not then clouded by misapprehension and ignorance; his perceptions were then clear, and his judgment unbiassed. No bitter envyings or repinings at that time troubled his unperturbed spirit, which was perpetually ascending to heaven in prayer, in praise, and in adoration; or pouring itself forth in expressions of holy love towards his fellow-creatures.'

"'Such was man, such was our father Adam,' continued Mr. Osborne, 'before he admitted the poison of sin into his nature. But after alienating himself from

his Maker by disobedience, his nature underwent an entire change: body and soul immediately became corrupt; not partially corrupt, but actually, thoroughly, entirely, altogether sinful, insomuch that we, who are his offspring, are incapable of one good thought, or of one right and proper feeling towards our Creator.'

"Here Altamont, interrupting Mr. Osborne, said, 'Your doctrine, Sir, surprises me. What! is not man capable of one single correct feeling towards his Maker? What then, Sir, becomes of the dignity of our nature?—that dignity in which I once prided myself, though now so miserably fallen?'

"'Where, indeed, is that dignity gone?' said Mr. Osborne. 'When Adam fell, his glory departed; and there remained to man nothing more than the name of honour. But to leave these considerations, which may lead us from our purpose, permit me, my Lord, to press upon you the scriptural evidence of this doctrine of man's depravity and its consequences.'

"Mr. Osborne then referred to the following passages of Scripture:—viz. *And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* (Genesis vi. 5.) *And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations.* (Genesis ix. 12.) *What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?* (Job xv. 14—16.) *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.* (Psalm li. 5.) *There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.* (Eccles. vii. 20.) *From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man.* (Mark vii. 21—23.)

"On finishing his quotations, Mr. Osborne turned to Altamont, and said, 'You do not deny the authority of Scripture, my Lord; what do you think of these

texts? do they agree with your experience and observations?’

“‘I know not what to say,’ returned Altamont; ‘I have seen much that is evil in human nature, but I have known much also that is amiable.’

“‘We are not now speaking,’ returned Mr. Osborne, ‘of characters whom we believe to have been influenced by religion, because such characters have received a new principle of action, and a corrective of their natural depravity; such persons, therefore, must be set aside in our arguments, and we must speak only of man as he appears when uninfluenced by religion. And I ask you, my Lord, what is your experience concerning such men? Does its testimony tend to confirm, or to contradict the words of Scripture?’

“Altamont hesitated a moment, as if deeply reflecting; and, in fact, during this short interval, his thoughts had rapidly passed over many scenes of former days with which his memory was now heavily burdened. At length, he replied: ‘I can remember no one instance, among those of my former acquaintance,’ said he, ‘who were uninfluenced by religion, which forms any exception to the testimony of Scripture respecting man’s natural depravity. And when I look into my own heart, as I did last night when left alone, I can see nothing else there but extreme selfishness connected with every other evil passion.’

“‘I rejoice to hear this,’ said Mr. Osborne.

“‘Rejoice!’ returned Altamont.

“‘Yes,’ said the other; ‘inasmuch as I feel an assurance that flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but the Spirit of God. Man is naturally unacquainted with the evil of his heart: he opens his eyes slowly and unwillingly to the conviction of sin, even when it is forced upon him by a power which he cannot resist.’

“Mr. Osborne then entered more largely and fully upon the subject of man’s natural depravity; during which discussion, Altamont was enabled to make the following observations.

“‘In reviewing my past feelings,’ he said, ‘I cannot recollect experiencing one single sentiment respecting my Creator which could be called pious. If ever I thought of the Supreme Being, which I seldom did in

the early part of my life, it was with a kind of shuddering reluctance and aversion, as of one who would some time or other call me to account for such of my actions as my conscience disapproved. With respect to my fellow-creatures, I considered them in no other light than as they might be made to contribute to my pleasures. While as for those who interfered with my satisfactions, I pursued them with a rancour, that has at length reduced me to the state in which you now behold me—to this dungeon, to these chains, to death, and to despair.'

“ ‘No, no,’ said Mr. Osborne, ‘I trust not to despair; there is hope for the most atrocious sinner through the blood of Christ, through the merits of that Saviour who looked down from the cross upon his murderers and said, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

“ ‘There is a plan formed by Infinite Wisdom’, continued the venerable man, ‘for the salvation of sinners, so wonderful in its nature, so comprehensive in its extent, so marvellous in its effects, that he who looks upon it with the eye of faith though he were dead yet shall he live.’

“ Here Mr. Osborne was led into a particular explanation of the plan formed for man’s salvation, by the incomprehensible and blessed Trinity; upon which he entered with this important remark—to wit, that so much of the inscrutable counsels of the Almighty is revealed to each individual as is necessary for the well-being of that individual.

“ ‘The blessed and holy Scriptures,’ continued he, ‘discover to us the existence of a divine Trinity-in-Unity, revealing at the same time to the diligent enquirer, the distinct office which each of the three divine Persons of the Godhead has appropriated to himself in the work of man’s salvation.

“ Mr. Osborne then proceeded to observe, that the fall of man had necessarily been foreseen by the all-wise Creator, one of whose attributes involves the most perfect foreknowledge of every event that shall take place in time or through eternity; and that the glorious plan of man’s salvation had been the result of this foreknowledge—a plan by which the redeemed will finally be raised to a state of inconceivable glory and happiness, as the adopted sons of God. ‘By God the Father, (to use the phraseology adopted by the Church established

in this country,' continued Mr. Osborne, 'the redeemed "are predestinated to life according to his everlasting purposes." (*17th Article of the Church of England.*) By God the Son the punishment of their offences has been endured, and their souls redeemed at a price infinitely more precious than that of silver and gold. While by God the Spirit the heir of salvation is called, regenerated, and sanctified. Thus man, who is by nature a member of Satan, a child of wrath, and an heir of hell, is rendered a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.'

"Mr. Osborne perceiving that the unhappy young man continued to listen to him with increasing interest, went on to enlarge upon the three points above mentioned: namely, on man's being made, through grace, a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. 'They who are living in sin,' said Mr. Osborne, 'are truly and entirely separated from God, and, as you but now expressed yourself, are even in the habit of looking upon him with a kind of shuddering aversion and horror—but, on the contrary, when man becomes regenerate, and receives Christ by faith, he is then taken into an ineffable connexion with his Redeemer, which is nearer, more close, and more endearing, than that which subsists between a parent and child, being as intimate and complete as that which is maintained between the head and members of the same body. Before the fall of man, indeed, our first parents naturally lived in close communion with God—but this communion ceased when man became a sinner; nor can it be renewed, till the individual is led back by faith to his offended God through the medium of a Saviour.'

"It was through grace, and with a view to the promised Saviour, that the saints of old, Abel and Noah, Moses, Abraham and Isaac, David and Samuel, were enabled to approach their God, and were received into a state of divine communion with him. But the Christian, being favoured with a much clearer degree of light, partakes of a closer union with his Saviour than even the saints of old: insomuch that they who live by the faith of the Son of God, become, as I before remarked, so many members of that one mystical body, of which Christ is the head. Accordingly we find the

apostle thus addressing the Corinthian converts—*For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. Now, therefore, ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.* (1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 14, 27.)

“ ‘ Those persons, therefore,’ continued Mr. Osborne, ‘ who in this sense become members of Christ, will be admitted to all the privileges enjoyed by their glorious Head. From this their living Head will proceed nourishment to every limb, imparting the principle of life to those who were aforetime languishing and dying; while, as the parts of one body with their blessed Redeemer, they will enjoy a communication of his perfections, and become one spirit with their Lord and Master. By him they will be delivered through life from the *power* of sin, and from its *very being* at the hour of death. Yea, his tender care will follow their remains into the grave, as the Lord accompanied Israel into Egypt; and from thence he will finally raise them to reign with himself in everlasting glory.

“ ‘ But inasmuch as the head cannot suffer without the members suffering likewise, it is required of the believer in this world to take up the cross, and follow the suffering Saviour: and of you, my Lord,’ added Mr. Osborne, ‘ you who have indeed been the chief of sinners, this will especially be required, if you hope to partake of those glorious privileges of which I speak—that you should humble yourself in the dust—that you should welcome your present trials as means of awaking you, with the divine assistance, from your dream of sin—that you should acknowledge the justice of your punishment, and even thank the Almighty that bars, and bolts, and chains, have been employed to restrain you from further outrages. It is moreover requisite, that you should earnestly entreat of God that these chastisements may be blessed to the salvation of your soul: since, without his benediction, temporal afflictions, however severe they may be, or however long continued, must prove only the beginning of sorrows.’

“ Mr. Osborne here concluded his second visit. Returning however the next day, and repeating his visits for many days together, he found at length reason to hope that his endeavours to serve this miserable young man had not been without success.

“ Altamont seemed indeed to be much agitated, and even overwhelmed with despair, until the time of his trial. In court, however, whither Mr. Osborne accompanied him, he appeared humble and resigned, attempting no defence, and receiving his sentence with the meekest submission. After that time, his mind became considerably more composed: so that on Mr. Osborne’s first visit to him after his return to his cell as a condemned man, he addressed him with affection, and said, ‘ Oh, my friend! my best friend! what would my case have now been, had not the Lord in mercy commissioned you to visit me here?’

“ ‘ You take my visits then as an earnest of divine mercy?’ said Mr. Osborne.

“ ‘ I do,’ said Altamont; ‘ I have long done so. Your coming hither was the first circumstance that awakened me from despair. Before that period I had always been in the habit,’ continued he, ‘ of looking upon the dealings of the Almighty with respect to his creatures with a degree of prejudice which embittered my whole mind, and made me consider every untoward event which befel me as a mark of the divine displeasure. But when you were enabled to make me understand the real state of the case, assuring me that my heavenly Father had planned the means of my salvation ere yet the world was made, (as I now humbly trust he hath done,) I immediately felt my mind relieved; seeing every thing in a new point of view, and discovering that the consequences of my crime, my confinement, my deprivations, my shame, and my very chains, might all ultimately tend to the promotion of my everlasting happiness.

“ ‘ Oh, Mr. Osborne,’ continued Altamont, ‘ had these views been given me in my early years, how happy a man should I have been! Amelia had still been living—I had still possessed such a friend as Frederick—My son too, perhaps *many sons*, had been hanging on my knees—my honour had been untarnished, and my conscience clear of those innumerable

crimes, the remembrance of which now oppresses my soul.'

"Mr. Osborne replied: 'Blame not your parents, blame not your tutors, my Lord; but blame yourself. Every man in this privileged country has light enough, if he will use it. Remember the words of an apostle—*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.*' (James i. 13, 14.)

"'Mr. Osborne,' said Altamont with energy, 'mistake me not: I blame no one, much less my God. My parents loved me; I have made an evil return for their love. I am fully and deeply sensible of my misconduct towards them: I am vile in my own eyes. But the manner in which I have been brought to my present experience convinces me, that, if the doctrine of redeeming love were more universally taught, it would do more to reform the human race, than all the moral discourses which ever have been, or ever shall be delivered from our Christian pulpits. What,' said he, 'what was it that first broke my stubborn heart, but this view of my God? What was it but this which made me feel my own vileness, my ingratitude, and the enormity of my crimes? And has this God, I said to myself, whom I have dreaded and avoided from my early childhood, been engaged in preparing such a plan of salvation for my soul ere the beginning of time, as may render me everlasting happiness, without implicating that justice which, of all the divine attributes, is held in most abhorrence by the sinner? O blessed then be that justice, which is now as much bound to save me, as it once was to destroy me; since I accept the offers of mercy made me through Christ not only with thankfulness but with exultation, fully persuaded that perfect justice can never condemn him whose ransom is already paid. I still, however, expect some heavy moments, Mr. Osborne,' continued Altamont; 'and surely I deserve them: notwithstanding which, I am enabled to cast all my care upon Christ, with a humble confidence that I shall not be confounded.'

"Mr. Osborne gave Altamont his hand; it was the first time he had done so, and a starting tear accompanied the action. 'My son,' said he, 'let us join in

prayer: yea, let us join in thanksgivings to the Father of all mercies, for his especial grace vouchsafed unto you.'

" From that time Altamont was much in prayer, both when Mr. Osborne was present, and when he was left alone: but as Mr. Osborne spent much of his time in the cell of this penitent prisoner, he found many opportunities of assisting him in this important duty, as well as of conversing closely with him concerning the affairs of his soul. Altamont had, as might be expected, many heavy and desponding hours, when the remembrance of his crimes agitated and harassed him: and Mr. Osborne was not sorry to observe the frequent return of these painful feelings. Nevertheless, the condemned man never discovered any inclination to dispute the divine will; but even on these trying occasions he would submissively say, 'If I perish, the will of God be done; I have more than deserved it.' There were seasons, however, when brighter prospects opened before him: and at such times he would speak with so much warmth and vivacity of the redeeming love of God, as plainly proved that these things had been revealed to him by a divine Teacher. 'For such a one as I am,' said Altamont at one of these seasons, 'to be made a child of God and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven! O! wonderful mercy! O! the miraculous interposition of divine power!'

" Mr. Osborne took this occasion to enlarge upon the privileges of a child and heir. 'We all,' said he, 'have known the comforts of a father's house, the sweets of home, and something of that entire confidence which a child reposes in its parent. But we are told, that the tenderest love of an earthly parent, my son, is nothing when compared with that which our heavenly Father exercises towards his children. We read this touching description of the paternal love of the Almighty to his people, in the prophet Isaiah—*Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.*' (Isaiah xlix. 15.) An earthly parent may change; human beings are subject to forgetfulness, to resentment, to misapprehension, to partiality, often unreasonably preferring one child to another—even a mother may forget the infant that daily hangs at her

breast—but, with *the Father of lights, there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.* (James i. 17.) All those to whom the Father hath been reconciled through the blood of Christ, may rest assured of his everlasting love, and feel a humble confidence that he will never leave nor forsake them. Having through faith become children of God in this world, they shall assuredly be counted heirs of everlasting glory in the world to come; as the apostle most encouragingly speaks—*If we are children, then heirs of God through Christ.* (Gal. iv. 7.)

“‘ And O !’ continued Mr. Osborne, ‘ if we consider the privileges which these words include, it is only wonderful that our whole minds are not occupied by the glorious prospect which opens before us through the dying Saviour. But sin—the sin which is ever present with us—darkens our brightest prospects, and damps our best hopes, and will continue so to do until sin and death are swallowed up in victory.’

“ In this manner Mr. Osborne continued from time to time to converse with the young man, very frequently launching out in the praises of redeeming love,—till the last awful day arrived, which was to close the earthly career of the once admired and envied Altamont.

“ I forbear to enter into the particulars of these dreadful scenes: suffice it to say, that Mr. Osborne attended him to the last, and engaged with him in prayer upon the very scaffold. His deportment to the concluding moment of his life was calm and resigned: he acknowledged the justice of his sentence, and recommended his soul to the divine mercy, pleading with his latest breath the merits and death of his adorable Saviour. He then shook hands with Mr. Osborne; when, in one transitory glance, he expressed more of love and gratitude towards him than volumes could have unfolded.

“ A person who stood near the unfortunate youth at the time of his execution, thus describes his appearance.—He was dressed in black; his face being no otherwise changed from what it had been in the days of youthful pride, excepting that it was extremely pale, and his cheeks somewhat sunk. His fine hair was parted on his forehead, and tied in a knot behind, in the manner he had been accustomed to wear it. The expression of his countenance was, however, singularly altered; insomuch

that they who expected to read therein the malignant passions of the murderer, were astonished to behold there the evidences of deep contrition and calm resignation, mingled with the most touching expressions of humble confidence in God.

“Thus, in the case of Altamont, we see an instance of the mighty power of God in effecting that new creation by which a child of wrath is made ‘a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.’

“Lady N—— concluded her narrative by saying, that many particulars of these memoirs, especially the prison conversations, had been drawn from private letters, written at the time when the events took place; whence the simple facts were enriched with particular circumstances and descriptions, which otherwise must have speedily descended into oblivion.”

Here the lady of the manor closed her manuscript; and, as the evening was now far advanced, she requested her young people to join her in prayer.

*A Prayer for those divine Influences of the Holy Spirit, by which the Sinner is made a Member of Christ, a Child of God, and rendered fit to become an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

“O ALMIGHTY LORD, the ever blessed and incomprehensible Jehovah, we approach thee in the name and through the merits of that adorable Saviour by whose death we have access within the veil. We confess that we were all born unholy and unclean, children of wrath and heirs of hell; and we are persuaded, that we must for ever have remained in that deplorable state, had not redeeming love undertaken our deliverance. Thou, O Father, hast predestinated thy chosen ones unto eternal life, ‘according to thine everlasting purposes before the foundation of the world.’ Thou, O Son, hast paid down our ransom in thine own person upon the accursed tree. And thou, O Holy Ghost, art continually exerting thy blessed and prevailing influence in calling, in regenerating, and in sanctifying, the wandering sheep of the great Shepherd’s flock. O Holy Spirit, deign, for our Redeemer’s sake, to favour us with thine abiding influence: make

us new and contrite hearts ; lead us to Christ ; empty us of self ; sanctify our affections ; cleanse and purify our thoughts ; make us new creatures in deed and in truth, and thus prepare us for that glory which is prepared for all the redeemed. We are the clay, and thou, O Lord, art our potter : O make us holy vessels, fit for our Father's house. We are sensible that no human exertions are sufficient to change our vile natures ; but that the creation of a new heart must be of God, and of him only. Bestow then upon us, O Lord, this first best gift ; unite us to Christ as our living Head ; make us to be children of God on earth, in order that in the life to come we may have our portion with the possessors of the kingdom of heaven : and in the mean time give us grace humbly, heartily, and constantly, to resign ourselves, our souls, and bodies, into thy keeping, being assured that they who trust in thee shall never be confounded.

“ Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be all glory, and honour, and praise, from this time forth for evermore.”

## CHAPTER V.

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Q. *What did your Godfathers and Godmothers promise for you at your Baptism?*

A. *They did promise and vow three Things in my Name. First, that I should renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World.*

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IT was the fourth evening of the assembly at the manor-house, when the lady of the manor thus addressed the young people.—“What, my dear young friends, is the third question and answer in the Church Catechism?”

One of the young people immediately repeated the following words.—

“Q. What did your godfathers and godmothers promise for you in your baptism?

“A. They did promise and vow three things in my name. First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world.”

Here the lady of the manor interrupted the young speaker, saying, “You have now, my dear, repeated as much of the answer as we shall have leisure to explain this evening; we will therefore postpone the rest to a further occasion. We are now come to that vow which was made for you at your baptism, and which you are about to take upon yourselves in the presence of God and the Church. Hear what the address of the Bishop will be to you upon this subject.—‘Do ye here, in the presence of God and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that was made in your name at your baptism, ratifying and confirming the same in your own persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and to do all those things which your godfathers and godmothers then undertook for you?’ To which every

one of you must audibly answer, 'I do.' (*See Order of Confirmation.*)

"Now, my dear young people," proceeded the lady, "I call upon you to consider the amazing importance of the undertaking which you have before you. And I am sorry to intimate, that of the multitudes who take upon themselves this solemn obligation there is perhaps not one in a hundred who ever afterwards give it a single serious thought. This remark I make, not to encourage a spirit of censoriousness, which every Christian must hold in abhorrence; but, once for all, to induce you not to follow the world, but to judge and act according to the will of God and the tenor of Scripture. If you follow the world, you are not of God. If you run with the multitude, with the multitude you will be condemned. *For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* (Matt. vii. 13, 14.) *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*" (2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.)

The young ladies looked seriously on hearing this remark, but no one spoke: upon which the lady of the manor proposed that they should immediately proceed to an examination of the baptismal vow, the first part of which is the renunciation of the devil and all his works.—"What we learn from Scripture concerning this evil one," said she, "is, that he is an apostate angel, the implacable enemy and tempter of the human race, and especially hostile to believers, whom he desires to devour. He is called *Abaddon* in Hebrew, and *Apollyon* in Greek, that is, the *destroyer*. He is also denominated the angel of the bottomless pit, the prince of this world, the prince of darkness, a deceiver, a liar, a murderer, a tormentor; a being whose works are all that is opposed to good, and all that is hateful to God. We are taught to believe," proceeded she, "that the chief aim and object of this evil spirit is to exalt himself, and to depress the Deity; and that one of the chief means by which he works the destruction of man, is, by inducing

him to exalt the idol *self* even to the throne of the Almighty."

In this place, one of the young ladies, namely, Miss Anna Maria, remarked, that she had heard a friend say that Satan had not the same power in these days which he formerly possessed.

" My dear young lady," replied the lady of the manor, " one of the great arts of this grand deceiver, is, so to withdraw himself occasionally from our observation, that at the very time when he is perhaps carrying on those operations which are most effectually destructive of our happiness, he may excite in us a doubt even of his existence. It is wonderful with what nicety this arch deceiver adapts his temptations to the circumstances of the tempted. They who travel into foreign countries, and there strictly observe the state of the people among whom they sojourn, will not only have occasion to marvel at the power of Satan abroad, but will also become better judges of what he is doing at home. From the constant change of habits to which travellers are liable, and which naturally serves to emancipate them from the bands of custom and prejudice, they must (if they are so happy as to live under the influence of pious principles) unavoidably become impartial and clear-sighted observers of all that is amiss in their own land as well as in distant countries; whence they will be constrained to acknowledge, that although the arts of Satan may be more apparent in heathen lands, yet that there is perhaps no country on earth in which his influence operates in a more marvellous manner than in our own enlightened nation."

On hearing this assertion, Miss Anna Maria, and one or two of the elders of the party, looked earnestly and enquiringly at the lady of the manor; when she thus proceeded to prove the truth of the assertion she had made.—

" In those gloomy regions of midnight darkness," said she, " which the light of the Gospel has as yet been unable to penetrate—such as the burning plains of Africa, the wilds of America, the Eastern Archipelago, the islands of the Pacific Ocean, together with those parts of the East still unvisited by the Christian missionary—in all these places Satan appears with little disguise;

governing the people, as it were, in his own name, and, through the instrumentality of numberless abominable idols, exacting the performance of many bloody and obscene rites. In these dark corners of the earth, the enemy of mankind requires no elegant arts to set forth his abominations; but holds communication with wizards and witches in his own proper character, keeping men's minds in a state of absolute thralldom through their superstitious observance of omens, and prodigies, and frightful dreams. In countries a little raised above this extreme of blindness and ignorance—such, for instance, as the Mahometan countries—he finds it necessary to assume some kind of cloak, for the purpose of partially hiding his cloven foot. In such places he puts on the profession of morality, while he perverts the reasoning powers of man to the vilest purposes; puffing up his servants with the pride of intellect and human learning, yet leaving them as entirely the children of hell as he found them. In Roman Catholic countries, he allows a nearer approach to the truth—making use of names honoured and loved by all Christians; calling in the assistance of sacred harmony, magnificent architecture, exquisite statuary, and impressive painting, with all the pomp of splendid robes and solemn processions; exhibiting the Scripture emblem of the prayers of the saints ascending in fragrant clouds to the arched roofs of their temples, accompanied with the most imposing appearances of sanctity and devotion: in a word, the wolf there assumes the whole garb and semblance of the lamb. And here I cannot but remark, how amazing has been the skill and cunning of Satan, in first raising up, and then upholding the Roman Catholic system, that unparalleled system of delusion, by which the progress of Christianity has been strangely retarded for nearly two thousand years!

“ But even this amazing effort of diabolical skill is surpassed by the manœuvres he now employs,” proceeded the lady, “ in retarding the progress of that divine light which has dawned on our own country for several centuries, and which, we trust, will gradually diffuse itself through the surrounding nations. One of these manœuvres of our arch enemy,” continued the lady, “ and not one of the least refined, is that withdrawing of himself

into the back-ground, which we noticed before: insomuch that his very existence is become a question with irreligious persons in this country; while even the more pious are not seldom heard to assert, that his power is greatly diminished in these latter ages of the Church. Satan is aware that we are now too much enlightened to be led away with stories of witchcraft, and evil omens; the time for these things, at least with us, is wholly past by. The enemy has, therefore, changed his ground of attack: so that, instead of employing a system of terror in order to render men subservient to his will, he now allures them to his purpose by vanity, self-love, and other secret motives, which prove equally if not more abundantly successful. I will not say much of the allurements of pleasure in this place, because I trust that none here will ever think of putting themselves in the way of what are called *public amusements*; though I think it right, in this connexion, simply to remark, that public amusements and exhibitions are now brought to a degree of perfection which renders them a very powerful engine in the hand of Satan for the destruction of men's souls. Our theatrical amusements particularly, which were formerly grossly indelicate, are now set forth with a kind of mock sentiment, the fallacy of which few young persons can detect; but which, when admitted into the mind, never fail to fill it with false views of right and wrong, exciting a thousand delusive feelings, and effectually drawing the heart from God.

“Another art of Satan in this Christian and refined country,” continued the lady of the manor, “where innumerable individuals and societies are exerting themselves in the cause of religion, is *that* of not openly opposing any of these, but of destroying their effect by sowing discord among them, and employing one set of well-meaning persons in weakening the hands and marring the usefulness of another. And here,” said the lady of the manor, “I must finish my review of these works of our infernal enemy, by pointing out what I consider his master-piece of cunning; namely, the address with which he hath upheld, for so many ages, the credit and honour of the ancient writings of the heathen world. It is no doubt by this and the consequent contempt poured upon the sacred writers, that the Roman

Catholic system has been so long maintained on the Continent, as evidently appeared to me some years ago when visiting France; where I saw with surprise, that the statues and emblems of the ancient heathen divinities occupied every palace and public place, while those of even their saints were thrown comparatively into the shade. And I cannot question, but that the impiety of our English youth may, humanly speaking, be traced very frequently to the same source. For what else can we expect, when our infant sons are compelled to devote many hours daily to the study not only of the philosophers and historians of Greece and Rome, but also to those productions of their most licentious poets, which cannot be understood without an accurate knowledge of their abominable mythology, to the no small neglect of the New Testament, and the almost utter omission of the Old, in their original languages?

“While Satan is able,” continued the lady of the manor, “to carry this point thus triumphantly, although it is now nearly two thousand years since the revelation of the Christian system, I think we must not presume to say that his power is greatly diminished.”

The lady of the manor, requesting the further attention of the young ladies, informed them that she should then proceed to consider the next part of the clause in the Catechism:—namely, “The pomps and vanities of this wicked world.” “My dear young people,” said she, after a moment’s consideration, “it is perhaps difficult to define what are pomps and vanities; because those things which are proper and merely decent in one situation of life, may be called pomps and vanities when found in another: I have, however, by me a little narrative which was communicated to me by a friend, in which these matters are so well and accurately defined, that I shall satisfy myself by reading this story to you, without entering into any further discussion on the subject.”

### *The Two Cousins.*

In a certain village in one of the midland counties of England there formerly resided a gentleman and lady, who, having no child for some years after their marriage,

and expecting never to enjoy that blessing, adopted the orphan daughter of a sister—a little girl, who, at the time she entered her uncle's family, was not more than two years of age.

This child, whom we will call Maria, although an orphan, was not portionless, having about one thousand five hundred pounds settled upon her; a part of the interest of which her uncle was so kind as to allow to accumulate as long as she remained under his roof, deducting only what was barely sufficient to repay him for her board.

As soon as Maria was received into the family, plans were formed for her education and training—plans upon the whole extremely good, but which not being tempered with paternal tenderness, bordered rather upon too great strictness; not however so much as to render them injurious to the permanent good of the child, although her present comfort was sometimes unnecessarily affected by them.

Notwithstanding this needless severity, Maria loved her uncle and aunt; and as no indiscreet visitor or servant was allowed to interfere between the child and her protectors, Maria, whose natural disposition was mild and accommodating, never supposed that her situation was in any way different from that of most other children.

When Maria had been in this family about three years, it pleased God to gratify her uncle and aunt with what they had long earnestly desired. A little daughter was born to them, who became the distinguished darling of the whole family.

The birth of Matilda rather increased than diminished the difficulties of Maria, inasmuch as she was required in various ways to submit to the humours and whims of the growing favourite: for although Matilda was not indulged in the commission of gross improprieties, yet her lesser faults were so winked at by her parents, as to allow her ill humours to cause her cousin needless vexation on a thousand little occasions.

In the mean time, Maria was told, when Matilda was unreasonable, that she must excuse her on account of her youth, and endeavour to please her because she was a child. Thus was the proper order of things continually

inverted in this family, by making the elder submit to the younger; an arrangement which, as might have been expected, proved decidedly injurious to Matilda; while, through the divine blessing, Maria continually improved under the constant exercise of petty acts of self-denial. They who love to observe the dealings of the Almighty towards his children, will be particularly struck with the manner in which he renders the ordinary events of life subservient to their good, preparing them for glory under circumstances apparently the most adverse to such preparations.

The absence of pleasurable incidents during the youth of Maria at first tended to make her thoughtful; whence, through the leadings of the Holy Spirit, she was gradually brought to the consideration of religious subjects. And by the divine blessing, in proportion as she became more sensible of the painful circumstances attending her situation under her uncle's roof, she felt such an increasing desire for spiritual comfort and divine communion, as gradually tended to the production of that peace to which otherwise she must have remained a stranger. She was even made to see, amid all the little disagreeablenesses of her situation, that she had received such solid benefits from her uncle and aunt as she could never be sufficiently grateful for. She perceived that the education which they had given her was indeed a useful one, and that the very discipline to which they had made her submit would probably enable her to support with more patience those trials, which in the ordinary course of things she had to expect in future life. Thus the reflections which these subjects excited, were made in a spirit of charity and thankfulness; and certain it is, that no one can meditate on the inconveniences and troubles of their own life in such a spirit, unless divinely assisted so to do.

Maria remained in her uncle's family till she had attained her twenty-fifth year, at which time she was seen by a young gentleman lately established in the law in a neighbouring town, to whom she appeared with so many attractions as speedily determined him to solicit her uncle's permission to visit her.

Mr. Charles Hunter, for such was the name of the young man who had attached himself to Maria, was one

of the younger sons of a genteel family in the neighbourhood. His patrimony was about one hundred pounds per annum, together with a handsome house in the town where he resided. Added to this, his profession, at the period when he sought Maria's hand in marriage, produced him about one hundred and fifty pounds a year.

After Mr. Charles Hunter had made his mind known to Maria's uncle, and it was found that he was not disagreeable to her, and that his character upon the whole stood higher than that of the generality of young men, a council was called by the families on both sides, when all parties being agreed upon the propriety of the marriage, calculations were made upon the income which the young people would possess; and which, on a reasonable computation, was found to be about three hundred and twenty pounds a year, together with a handsome house ready furnished. It was therefore unanimously decided by the old people that this might do, as Mr. Hunter had a growing profession in his hands.

The next consideration was, what establishment should be fixed upon for the young people. In all these consultations, Maria, if present, presumed to give no opinion, not knowing how far money would go in housekeeping; and Mr. Charles Hunter, being equally inexperienced as herself, had almost as little to say.

Consequently the old people had every thing their own way; and it was natural to suppose that, on occasions of this kind, those who had known the expence of maintaining a family, might be trusted not to involve their children in difficulties. But old Mrs. Hunter, being a woman of family, and much in bondage to the pomps and vanities of this world, was more taken up, in ordering her son's establishment, with views of family consequence, than with the real comfort of her children; insomuch that, while considering what kind of figure she should wish her son and daughter-in-law to make in the town of K—, she lost sight of their income and of what that would allow.

Her manner of speaking was generally to this effect, or something very like it.—“Charles's drawing-room is well furnished; every thing in it is handsome; nothing is wanting but a mirror between the windows. There must be a mirror: the room will not do without a mirror.

And the best bed-room requires a carpet: there must absolutely be a carpet over a great part of the room. Another dressing-table and glass will also be wanted; those which now stand there are not the thing at all. If any of my son's noble clients should come to town, and he should think it necessary to offer them a bed, the room, as it now is, would be quite insufficient. My daughter-in-law must have two maid-servants—a cook, and a housemaid—it would be impossible to do with less; and to these must be added a footboy, to wait at table, and open the door to company. My son will have no business, if he does not make a respectable figure in the town, particularly as a married man. A professional man, who does not keep up a creditable appearance, will never be employed: this is universally acknowledged. My son must also keep a horse; Mr. Charles Hunter cannot do without a horse."

In this manner the old lady very fluently proceeded; and being what the world calls a clever woman, that is, one who had much to say on every subject that interested her, she easily carried every thing her own way. The mirror was bought, the carpets, the dressing-table, and various other needless articles not worthy of note; by which all the ready money of the young couple was swallowed up, together with several lesser sums which had been received as marriage presents from the friends of the respective parties. A cook, a housemaid, and a footman, were hired and established in their several places a short time previous to the marriage. Maria's uncle and aunt in the mean time (though generally esteemed prudent persons) remained passive spectators of these imprudent proceedings, while they could not but foresee the consequences of this sinful accommodation to the world.

Thus do many persons, who in their baptismal engagement have undertaken to renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, not only pursue these vanities themselves through a long life, but take an active part in plunging the young people over whom they have any influence into the same destructive course. And this may be said not only of those who are manifestly devoted to the world, but even of such as believe themselves pious, yea, and who are deemed such in religious society.

Leaving however these reflections, we will proceed with our narrative.

All these preparations being made, the marriage took place: when, after a few weeks, Maria found herself quietly established in her new house, while her husband was again busily engaged in his professional duties. And now, being left to herself in a situation totally new to her, the young bride presently found occasion for the exercise of all those Christian graces, which had hitherto lain almost concealed beneath the pressure of that severe discipline to which she had been so long subjected in the house of her uncle. By the divine blessing she was made fully sensible of the awful responsibility of her situation; and believing the Holy Scriptures to be the only true and infallible guide to a Christian course of life, she spent much of her present leisure in studying her Bible and praying over it. She also about this time had opportunity of frequently hearing a truly pious minister, through whose instrumentality her views of religion were rendered more distinct and clear; in consequence of which she formed a more accurate and exalted idea of her duties as a wife.

And here let it be remarked, that, as much leisure is often within the reach of young women after their marriage, before they become liable to the cares and burdens of a small family, it would be highly commendable in them to spend a portion of that leisure in studying the duties of the new and important situation into which they have entered, often shutting themselves up in their closets, as Maria did, to meditate and pray over the sacred Scriptures, drawing from that Holy Volume their rules of life, and, like the holy women of old, gathering materials thence, not for *that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.* (1 Peter iii. 3, 4.) But, alas! this is a time in which women for the most part think they may give themselves up to dress and vanity, to the pursuit of pleasure and the enjoyment of company; which unhappy course they frequently follow, till some severe affliction—loss of health, alienation of their husband's affections, or confusion and

embarrassment in their affairs—occurs to awaken them from their dream of folly.

Maria, however, by the blessing of God, acted a different part. She had some visitors at first, whose compliments she returned with as much expedition and as little loss of time as possible. After which, as I before said, she availed herself of the leisure which followed in studying her new duties with all the seriousness they required; neither relying upon her own strength, nor confiding in her own judgment, but with earnest prayer and a continual reference to Scripture.

She found it at first irksome to look into the minutiae of family management; and watching over the conduct of her servants was quite a severe trial to her. But the Scripture speaketh decidedly upon this subject—*Let him that ruleth, do it with diligence*: (Rom. xii. 8.)—the duty therefore being a clear and positive one, with two or three struggles she brought herself to the conscientious performance of it: after which the difficulty became daily less.

The family accounts of every article, and how much might conveniently be expended upon them, became the next subjects of her consideration: and here it may be observed, that what an experienced housekeeper would have settled in half an hour, was to her the work of half a morning. But she had as yet no child; her household was small; and she perceived the necessity of acquiring some facility in the management of these matters before any increase of family could possibly take place to augment her difficulties. As the wise man says, *To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven*: (Eccles. iii. 1;) Maria accordingly found that the present time brought with it certain tasks which ought to be performed, and which, if omitted till other duties should call her attention, might perhaps throw her whole life into confusion. And herein this young woman was enabled to form a correct judgment: since it is certain, that not only in her peculiar case, which was that of entering upon the duties of married life and those of the mistress of a family, but in the case of every individual dwelling upon the face of the earth, at all seasons, and in every conceivable situation, the passing hour must needs bring with it some portion of

work to be immediately performed, and which, if neglected, will more or less diminish the peace, the comfort, or the credit of some succeeding hour. Through the redeeming love of our compassionate Lord, we believe indeed that all the effects of his people's errors will hereafter be totally done away; when, clothed in the garment of salvation, they shall rejoice for evermore in the presence of God, in that blessed land where the tears are wiped from every eye—but we have no promise of being freed from the consequences of our ill conduct in the present world; for it is written, *He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity*: (Prov. xxii. 8:) and again, *He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.* (Psalm cxxvi. 6.)

I will venture to repeat this remark, on account of its vast importance. From the time that the infant first draws its breath, until that awful period when the soul forsakes its breathless body, each flitting moment brings with it a certain obligation to the performance of some particular exercise—some unhappy temper is to be restrained; some important lesson to be learned; some new faculty to be acquired; or some latent power to be brought into use. And they who daily endeavour to execute the present task appointed by the all-wise Creator, looking up to him in simple dependence upon his promised assistance, will seldom find that overwhelming accumulation of duties, or that perplexing hurry of business, of which so many complain: for the yoke of the Almighty in itself is easy, and his burden light; as all his faithful servants have found in all their generations. Our duties are generally set before us one by one; and, commonly speaking, the means of performing those duties are supplied at the same time. A mother has seldom more than one child at a birth; and, before her family becomes large, abundant leisure, and space, and opportunity, are given her to mould her first-born child, with the divine blessing, into a faithful and powerful instrument for the management of the rest, as well as into a lovely pattern by which its juniors may be naturally and sweetly led forward from one degree of excellence to another. But the careless or indolent parent or house-keeper, she who has failed in youth to fit herself for

future duties, and who in her early married state has neglected the performance of her little daily tasks of instruction and correction, or of personal labour and inspection, will certainly find herself at length plunged into an abyss of cares and troubles, from which she can never expect to be extricated till she has reached the close of a wretched and wearisome life.

But to return to Maria. By considering her duties, looking into the concerns of her family, and forming minute calculations, she perceived, in a very few weeks, that they were living beyond their income by at least as much as a hundred a year. The discovery alarmed her: she made fresh calculations again and again; but the result was always the same. She became in consequence very uneasy. She formed little plans of retrenchment in the kitchen and in the parlour, such as she hoped might escape her husband's notice. But when the servants (particularly the housemaid, who was the person of least use in the family) perceived what their mistress was about, they opposed and thwarted her in every possible way, becoming not only more lavish but perversely wasteful.

At the same time, poor Maria found herself less well than usual, and subject to many little uneasy feelings which, had they been much regarded, would have led her to new personal indulgences. She considered however that if she did not now exert herself, her husband's affairs would certainly become perplexed; and that whereas they were now happy in each other, they might become miserable merely through the pressure of pecuniary difficulties. She therefore gave way no further to her feelings than absolute necessity required. On being very much overcome, she would perhaps lie down for half an hour; and when a little refreshed, she would rouse herself, and go on with her usual employments. And so far was she from finding herself the worse for these exertions, that she even reaped considerable benefit from them: her unpleasant feelings were thereby prevented from growing upon her, while she retained that activity which many young women lose by improper indulgence after marriage.

In the mean time, Mr. Hunter began to be sensible as well as his wife that they were living beyond their income;

and this idea preying on his mind affected his temper, as was very evident when he came out of his office to his meals. Nevertheless, with a kind of inconsistency more frequently to be remarked, perhaps, in men than in women, although he spoke of economy as generally necessary, he violently opposed every particular application of it, and was manifestly disconcerted whenever there was a less handsome dinner than usual. All this time he never conferred freely with his wife on the subject of their affairs; which would have yielded a proof of confidence peculiarly acceptable to her. And now poor Maria saw her happiness passing gradually from her, while increasing earthly cares were rapidly consuming that tender love which had so lately subsisted between herself and her husband.

At this time, several circumstances tended to increase her uneasiness: and one especially, which was of a nature to have given her the utmost pleasure had it not been for the state of their finances. She perceived the prospect of an approaching addition to her family: but she was backward to reveal this circumstance to her husband, because, although he had never opened his mind to her upon the subject of his affairs, she was no stranger to his troubled thoughts on that subject. Another thing which added to her trouble at this time, was the visit of a married sister of Mr. Hunter's, who, after witnessing some of her brother's ill humours, ventured to condole with her sister-in-law on the unkindness of her husband, and to drop certain hints which, had they been hearkened to, would have greatly increased the uneasiness of Maria. But this excellent young woman, though much hurt at the intimations occasionally thrown out by this false friend, was restrained by her heavenly Father, as she afterwards had reason to think, from speaking freely to her visitant on this delicate subject. On the contrary, this affectionate and prudent wife was led to apply, under these severe trials, not to her fellow-creatures, but to that throne of grace where real help may always be found. At length two little plans for meliorating their circumstances were presented to her mind; and though these ideas seemingly originated in a natural way, and in the common course of things, she nevertheless was taught to discover in them the good hand of God.

One day, when much dejected, and after earnest prayer, a letter was brought her from a very respectable and rich elderly lady, whom she had known from her childhood, requesting that she would procure lodgings for her in the town of K——; adding, that she should be willing to pay handsomely for good accommodations, should keep regular hours, and see little company. It struck Maria at once, that, if she could procure Mr. Hunter's consent to accommodate this lady, it would be a means of adding seventy or eighty guineas annually to their income: and further, that, if she could by any exertion do without their housemaid, who was an impertinent and extravagant person, the hundred pounds annually which was deficient would be more than made up. No sooner were these views presented to the mind of Maria, than she felt a load removed from her heart; upon which she resolved to communicate her thoughts to Mr. Hunter on these subjects, when he should come in to tea after the business of the day.

I shall not enter into every particular of the conversation which followed between Maria and her husband; it would take up too much of our time. Suffice it to say, that she opened her whole heart to him on this occasion: first stating to him her strong sense of the evil of living beyond their income, which they were then actually doing; and then pointing out to him the two remedies which had been brought to her mind.

He heard the first part of her discourse with intense anxiety and in deep silence: but when he understood the whole of her plans for remedying the evils which she had pointed out, and of which he was as fully aware as herself, he broke out into a violent fit of anger, allowing some strong and contemptuous expressions to escape him, by which it appeared that he did not entertain a very high opinion of the understanding of women in general. "If you choose," said he, "to work like a common servant, you are at liberty to do so; only do not, I pray you, appear before my visitors in a coloured apron. But as to taking in a lodger," he added, "I wonder how a woman of common sense can suggest so absurd an idea. Little as you seem to suspect it, such a step would entirely destroy my credit as a professional man,"—and here he repeated that erroneous maxim

which is so continually in the mouths of worldly persons, “A professional man, who does not make a figure in the world, will never be employed.”

“ My dear Mr. Hunter,” answered Maria, “ I have often heard that remark made before; but I cannot help thinking on these subjects in a way very different from that which the world has adopted. I believe that the hearts of all men are in the hand of the Almighty, and that he can give us favour even in the eyes of our enemies, if he pleases, as he once gave the Children of Israel favour in those of the Egyptians. The Almighty can and will withhold or bestow success on you as a professional man just in the degree he pleases, after all your own efforts and exertions. He is our best advocate in the hearts of men. Let us not therefore, by worldly wisdom, take our cause out of his hands, or, by doing any thing in the least dishonourable to him, forfeit his favour and protection. If he has not given us the means honestly and justly of making a handsome figure in the world, does it not become us to submit humbly and cheerfully to his holy will? Can we not perceive, that he is only bringing us by unexpected circumstances to give up those *pomps and vanities* of the present world which we in our baptismal covenant pledged ourselves to renounce? and the sooner we submit to his appointments, the sooner our trials will be at an end.”

“ But,” answered Mr. Hunter, whose mind was just at that moment in a very improper state, “ I suppose, when you took upon you your baptismal vow, you did not undertake to renounce all the decencies of life. I should be obliged to you to inform me, if you know of any man of my rank in life, or of a family of such respectability as mine in this country, who supports himself by letting lodgings ?”

“ Possibly,” replied Maria, meekly, “ I may not know a gentleman of your profession, and of so good a family, in circumstances so straitened as yours now are. But, at any rate, my dear Mr. Hunter, must we not submit to the appointments of God, and the dispensations of Providence? It is certain, that, if we do not exert ourselves in some way, either to diminish our establishment, or to augment our income, care and sorrow will shortly take place of the happiness we lately enjoyed, while we shall

only have ourselves to blame for acting decidedly wrong, and indulging our pride at the expence of our comfort."

The warmth with which Maria spoke these last words drew a very vehement retort from her husband. But this excellent young woman, convinced that she was right, and not intimidated by his harshness, was enabled thus to reply: "There is no fatigue, my dear Mr. Hunter, which I would not undergo to save you and myself from worldly solicitude and pecuniary difficulties—difficulties which might induce you, as they have done many others, to depart from your integrity. I am young, and as well able to exert myself as most other women. I am ready to perform what I have undertaken; that is, to do with one female servant, and to give up my drawing-room and best bed-room, until such time as God may see fit, by an increase of your income, to remove the necessity of these measures. All these things," added she, smiling, "I hope, with your permission, to perform not only cheerfully, but with a far more cheerful heart than I have lately possessed; humbly trusting that I shall be favoured herein with the divine assistance, which I have very sincerely and earnestly implored in the name of our blessed Saviour."

Mr. Hunter looked eagerly at her while she spoke: then turning away, he sat for a considerable time with his eyes fixed upon the fire, apparently stupid, but in fact deeply considering every word which she had uttered; while a strong feeling of pride and worldly prejudice was contending in his mind with a sense of duty. He admired his wife, and loved her at that moment more than ever; while the entire absence of any thing like selfishness on this occasion made him more than half ashamed of himself and of his own conduct—for what privation had he proposed to undergo? or what sacrifice had he thought of making? Indeed, he had not at that time the piety of his wife; and it is certain that self-denial can be reasonably expected from the true Christian alone.

In this manner he had sat for a quarter of an hour or more, when Maria drawing a sigh, which at the same time she seemed endeavouring to suppress, he looked up, and saw her busy with her needle, while the tears dropped fast upon her work—tears which she had for-

borne to wipe away, as not wishing to draw his attention to them. Maria had never attempted to excite his feelings by those childish arts which are often practised by our sex, such as an affected sensibility, or making the most of any little uncomfortable feelings to which our frail nature is liable; therefore her tears, shed on such an occasion, had their full effect, and conquered in a moment the pride and prejudice of her husband. He rose hastily from his seat, and seizing her hand—"O my beloved wife!" he said, "you have conquered: I consent to all you propose. Only forgive my hasty conduct and brutal expressions, and you shall do all you desire. I acknowledge your discretion, I feel your value, and you are dearer to me than ever."

Joy and gratitude now became the predominant feelings of Maria's heart, and all her husband's harsh expressions were at once forgotten. The next morning, happy in thinking that she was following the dictates of her heavenly Father's will, she not only wrote to offer the old lady the best accommodations her house could afford, but also informed the housemaid that she might consider herself in one month at liberty to take her departure. All this she managed without a reference to her husband; wisely resolving, with her usual prudence, to avoid the chance of irritating him again by unnecessarily touching on these subjects. In a few days she had a favourable answer from the lady; who, for the offered accommodations, engaged to pay eighty guineas annually, a sum which Maria thought extremely handsome. The lady was to bring a servant with her; and Maria contrived to convert a little servants'-hall into a kitchen for her use.

In the mean time, the housemaid, being very impudent, was paid her month's wages, and dismissed. Thus every thing was arranged to Maria's satisfaction, and peace restored to her mind. It was therefore with a light and happy heart that she began to labour with her own hands, after the departure of her housemaid, in order to make up the deficiency occasioned by her absence—and she now would certainly have been surprised to find that health and pleasure were added to sweeten these new employments, had she not already been taught by experience that the ways of duty are the ways of peace.

At Christmas, the old lady above mentioned took possession of her apartments, with which she was well satisfied. And Mr. Hunter expressed no mortification on the occasion: for, in fact, his external comforts were not in the least affected by the residence of a quiet old lady in that part of his house, which had hitherto been seldom used; and especially since he still possessed his handsome dining-room, where Maria was always ready to receive him, neatly dressed, and adorned with a thousand Christian graces.

The winter passed very sweetly with Mr. Hunter and his wife, and in the spring they were favoured with the birth of a fine little girl. Mr. Hunter's profession in the mean time was gradually becoming more productive; but so gradually, that had not the economical alterations proposed by Maria been put in practice, the family would certainly have been involved in great difficulties, before they could have felt the advantage of their improving affairs.

When Maria had sent her nurse away, after the birth of her little girl, she began to feel a real inconvenience from having only one servant. She therefore exerted herself to the utmost, and spent most of her time in the nursery; which, however fatiguing, had this advantage, that it endeared her the more to her child, and initiated her at once into the whole science of nursing and managing an infant. Finding, however, the difficulty very great, and discovering, when they came to calculate their outgoings at the end of the quarter after the birth of their little girl, that they could bear the expence of such an arrangement, she hired a young servant, who was to assist in every thing that was required, and especially to carry the baby abroad into the air. In order moreover the better to enable her husband to bear this expence, Maria made her wedding-bonnet last her another year; in addition to which, she practised several little modes of private economy, which she trusted would escape Mr. Hunter's observation.

Thus passed away their time till Midsummer. Maria in the mean while, becoming every day more dear to her husband, was gaining, step by step, certain points on which her heart was set, and which, having nothing of

self connected with them, were not likely to grow into causes of offence.

When their income was most straitened, she had not indeed thought it right to give much away; because she feared that they might not be able to pay their tradesmen's bills. But even then she had endeavoured to open a little fountain of charity, by exercising the most rigorous self-denial, and giving what she earned thereby to the poor. She often went without sugar to her tea, and other little private comforts of a like kind, for this purpose. But as they advanced into easier circumstances, she enlarged her charities; till at length she succeeded in persuading her husband to put a certain sum every month into a poor's-box, so that they might always have something ready to answer calls of charity.

Thus economy, rightly practised, produced its natural fruits of liberality and freedom from care: while Mr. Hunter, feeling himself at ease in his circumstances, was the better enabled to retain his integrity as a professional man; in consequence of which his reputation became from day to day more solidly established.

Whenever Mr. Hunter now looked into his private affairs, he could not fail to observe the effects of his wife's prudent management; and this led him very frequently to consider how he might shew his affection to her in such a manner as she would most approve.

Having one day received a debt which he had entirely given up, he went to a bookseller's, and bought an excellent Family Bible, with notes; which, on taking home, he presented to her with an intimation that he intended every evening to read to her a portion of that volume. He meant by this to do her a pleasure; for as yet he had no higher motive: and he did not lose his reward—she was manifestly made very happy by it.

In this manner, becoming more and more comfortable, as the ways of husband and wife became more and more conformed to the will of God, the *pomps and vanities* of this wicked world, which are the bane and destruction of the peace of thousands and tens of thousands, being excluded, Mr. and Mrs. Hunter spent the first year and half of their marriage, during which time they had seen none of their relations except the sister before mentioned; for Maria's uncle and aunt never left home, and Mr.

Hunter's family had taken a house for three years in Bath. But in the middle of the second winter, an old lady, one of the heads of the Hunter Family, one from whom the family had some expectances, and whose influence was consequently great among them, came from a distant part of the county to pay a circular visit among her relations.

This lady, whom we shall call Mrs. Josephina Hunter, paid her first visit to the family at Bath; where having collected the opinions of certain individuals concerning the proceedings of Charles and his wife, she arrived at K— about the beginning of the year, with the full purpose of putting every thing to rights which might appear to her to be amiss in the family of her cousin. She arrived in the mail-coach about tea-time, finding Charles and Maria sitting before a cheerful fire—Maria making a frock for her infant, and Mr. Hunter reading his Bible aloud. Although they had the use only of one parlour, every thing appeared neat and orderly about them; and the tea-equipage which they were then using, if not splendid, was convenient and genteel.

Mrs. Josephina was received respectfully by Maria, and affectionately by Charles, who had known her when he was a child, and had always been taught to look up to her as to one of the most judicious and prudent women in the world.

Mrs. Josephina was very gracious to Maria; while it was very evident that she observed every thing about her with a keen and scrutinizing eye, although as yet she ventured not to find fault with any thing, but conversed about her journey, and the situation of their friends in Bath. "Your sisters look well, Charles," she said, "and, I am happy to say, are vastly improved in their style of dress: they are now as well-dressed girls as any in Bath."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Hunter: "I had been led to understand that they were become serious, and were regularly attendant upon such as are termed *decided* preachers."

"All which is very true," replied Mrs. Josephina. "But you don't hold it sinful, I presume, to dress in a way fit to be seen! I do not perceive wherefore persons, when they become religious, are to become com-

plete sluts and slovens. I know indeed that some high professors think so: but I never could find any thing to that purpose in the Bible. Different people, however, do certainly read with different eyes."

This was the first symptom of an attack. But Mr. Hunter not taking up the adverse side, the matter dropped.

During tea-time, the lady in the drawing-room rang for her servant; upon which Mrs. Josephina coloured, but said nothing till the bell rang again, when she asked Maria if she had any visitors in the house? To which Maria answering "No," the matter rested; till about an hour afterwards the bell ringing again, she said, "What is that bell I hear so continually?"

"It is the lady's bell," replied Maria, calmly; "a lady who occupies our drawing-room."

"O then you *have* a visitor in the house?" said Mrs. Josephina, affecting surprise, and looking at Mr. Hunter; "I thought you said you had none!"

He coloured, and not being prepared to answer, Maria replied, and said, "We have found it necessary, our income not answering our expences, to let our drawing-room and best bed-room to a very respectable lady, an old friend of mine."

Mrs. Josephina affected amazement; we say affected, because she had heard the whole history of the lodger, at Bath; and therefore could not now feel any surprise at what she knew so well before. "You certainly," said she, "must know your own affairs best, Mrs. Charles Hunter; but surely it is rather going out of your line of life to let lodgings, and to be at the beck and call of every person you take into the house. And indeed, Charles," (turning to him,) "I should think it a most injudicious step in your situation. Do you not know that a professional man who does not make a respectable figure in society will never be employed? And surely nothing can be more degrading than to let out your house in lodgings!"

While she continued to hold forth in this manner, Mr. Hunter shewed strong symptoms of that false shame, which, wherever it is observed, gives courage to the enemy, and often enables the children of this world to obtain a temporary triumph over the sons of God. He

remained perfectly silent, and, colouring up to the eyes, directed her by his looks to address herself to his wife; at the same time getting up and desiring to be called when supper was ready, he returned to his office.

Maria was now left alone to all the violence of Mrs. Josephina's attacks; but her own mind being immovably made up on these subjects, she was perfectly indifferent to all that was said to her, feeling nothing but a Christian solicitude to avoid using any expression which might increase the old lady's irritation. For a length of time she accordingly allowed her to expatiate on the subject in dispute: when hoping that she had nearly exhausted all that could well be urged on the matter, she calmly explained to her visitant the motives of her conduct in letting those apartments; taking all the blame upon herself, and observing that she considered it an important Christian duty, to avoid, if possible, running in debt, and to accommodate herself in every particular to the will of God, as indicated in his dealings towards her.

"If it is the will of the Almighty," continued Maria, "that we should be straitened in our circumstances; it is certainly our duty to submit to his good pleasure, and to bring down our habits to that rule which he has marked out for us. With all the exertions we have hitherto made, we have not as yet found at the end of each quarter that we have more than four or five guineas in hand; and had we continued to live as we first set out, we should already have been nearly two hundred pounds out of pocket. Setting aside therefore our present peace, which has been greatly increased by our determination to submit to circumstances, we consider ourselves bound, as we must answer to God, to use such means as we lawfully and innocently may for the provision of our family; and however little we may possess, we wish to be grateful for that little, as being more than we have any right to expect."

"Indeed," said Mrs. Josephina, "I do not understand that at all. You are, I believe, of a very respectable family, and Mr. Charles Hunter is remarkably well descended. The Hunters are as old a family as any in the country; and though you boast of your management, yet I must plainly tell you, that your style is much below that of any part of the family with which I have ever been acquainted."

“ My dear Madam,” replied Maria, “ I do not presume to dispute that point. I know that Mr. Hunter’s family has long been a respectable one. But let us consider from whence do honour and promotion proceed.—*They come neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south: but God is the judge; he putteth down one, and setteth up another.* (Psalm lxxv. 6, 7.) When the Almighty withholds the means by which individuals or families are supported, it is surely an indication that he would have such individuals or families, at least for a time, to descend a little in the scale of society. Are we not in his hands as clay in the hands of the potter? and ought we not to submit with cheerfulness to every appointment of our heavenly Father?”

Mrs. Josephina had allowed Maria to run on thus far in explanation of her conduct and principles, because she knew not how to prevent it; Mrs. Hunter manifesting an earnestness in her manner which hardly permitted an interruption. As soon however as she ceased to speak, the old lady took up the argument precisely where she had laid it down, without making the smallest reference to any thing which Maria had alleged.—“ Mr. Hunter’s father,” she said, “ you know was once sheriff of the county. To be sure he has had losses since that time, as well as a large family to maintain: notwithstanding which they have always lived in a most respectable manner; and I doubt not but that, had you kept up your husband’s credit in this place, he would have had far more success in his professional career than he now appears to have.”

In this manner she proceeded, till Mrs. Hunter, hearing her infant cry, made an apology, and ran up to the nursery. There taking the child in her arms and kissing its polished cheek, at the same time addressing it in the soothing accents of a mother’s love, she presently lost all recollection of the cold and worldly discourse of her troublesome relation. Maria expected not to derive much comfort from the society of Mrs. Josephina, but she certainly had not anticipated so violent an attack upon her peace as she now experienced.

In the present state of society in England, where the enemies of Christ are no longer permitted to torture the bodies of the faithful, they are obliged to vary their mode

of attack: and since the laws present a strong bulwark in defence of the people of God, their opposers are compelled to aim their shafts wholly against the peace and comfort of their minds. But inasmuch as there is so wide and marked a space between the children of God and the children of this world, that the envenomed arrows of the latter, however well directed, have little power to reach the former at the distance at which they stand; persecutors have nothing left but to engage on their sides, if possible, such persons as occupy a place between both parties—those who may be connected with the faithful by ties of blood, or nearness of neighbourhood, or in some other way. Through the medium of these, the worldly man frequently attacks and wounds the faithful servants of God; and by their assistance occasions injury to them which he would otherwise have no means of effecting. Mrs. Josephina was aware of her little influence with Maria: she saw that their modes of thinking were so diametrically opposite, that Maria was not to be touched by any argument which she could employ. But she still conceived hopes that through the influence of her husband she might be able to bring her to that mode of conduct which she herself approved; and accordingly she determined that her next argument with the wife should be tried in the presence of her husband.

The subject of dispute was not renewed at supper, and the next morning before breakfast Maria was sent for by the old lady who occupied her apartments. It seems that this lady was afflicted with a disorder, which, although it did not threaten her immediate death, was of a nature so alarming as to convince her that her continuance in this world could not be long. And on fresh symptoms of this disorder appearing, she sent to request the presence of Mrs. Hunter, in order not only to thank her for her past kindness, but also to say, that as in all human probability her life would speedily come to a close, it would afford her much comfort to be assured that she should not be compelled to quit her present comfortable and peaceful abode till that solemn time should arrive—and she earnestly solicited Maria to give her this assurance. Maria replied, that as far as in her power she might depend upon not being disturbed; and

having thus satisfied the old lady, she hastened to make breakfast for her husband and their guest.

The whole of that day passed off with so little that was unpleasant on the part of Mrs. Josephina, that Maria began to hope nothing disagreeable would again occur in the way of argument between herself and her visitant. This however was a vain hope; for the very next day at dinner-time the old lady renewed her attack, and that with a degree of warmth altogether unaccountable to Maria. For she was not aware of the strong prejudice entertained by worldly persons against the plain and simple principles and scriptural modes of conduct adopted by the children of God.

It seems that the old lady had spent her morning in visiting some former acquaintances and family connexions in the town; among whom she had heard the character and conduct of Mrs. Charles Hunter talked over—the matter of the lodger and the dismission of the house-maid discussed and examined—with various conjectures thrown out concerning the motives of Maria's conduct in these particulars; her neighbours attributing *that* to caprice, humour, covetousness, and singularity, for which the word prudence would have naturally and honourably accounted.

After a morning thus spent, it is not to be supposed that Mrs. Josephina returned in the best possible humour to her cousin's house. She had been wounded, and that in the most tender point—the imaginary honour of her family: and she entered the house in a state of the highest dissatisfaction. She however refrained from giving utterance to her discontent, otherwise than by certain dark hints and inuendoes which she threw out from time to time until the dinner was removed, and the door shut upon the servant. She then turned to Mr. Hunter, and said, “Charles, I have been out this morning among my old friends and neighbours, and am returned home uneasy, as you have, no doubt, perceived. I am very low, I own it, and it may be a weakness: but I cannot divest myself of long established feelings.” Here the old lady sighed, and rubbed her eyes with a handkerchief.

“I hope that you have heard no bad news, cousin Josephina?” said Mr. Hunter.

“No, Charles,” replied Mrs. Josephina. “I have

heard nothing with which I was not in some degree acquainted before. But notwithstanding this, I have been much hurt."

Mr. Hunter looked at Maria, as if for an explanation of what he heard, and then at his cousin, being impatient for what she had further to produce.

"It is not many years ago that your father, Charles, was sheriff of this county," proceeded the old lady: "he was returned, Mr. Hunter, as I think, in the year 1775, or some time thereabout."

"But what of that, my good cousin? what has that to do with your having been cruelly wounded and hurt this morning?" said Mr. Hunter, smiling.

"What has that to do, Mr. Hunter, with my being cruelly wounded and hurt?" repeated Mrs. Josephina, turning hastily towards her cousin, her face swelling with smothered passion: "and do you really ask me such a question? Do I remember the time when the representative of our family entered this town in his coach and four, at the head of all the respectable gentlemen of the county? and is it to be supposed that I should have no feeling for the degradation of his son? In no house have I been this morning, where the subject of your letting lodgings was not discussed. Mr. Charles Hunter, let me tell you, if you do not know it already, that you have afforded discourse for all the town and neighbourhood by your extremely injudicious conduct."

As soon as Mr. Hunter perceived the tendency of this long preamble, he became violently irritated; first, by the folly of his cousin, and secondly, at finding himself and his concerns the subject of so much ridiculous tittle-tattle. At length, however, being pressed by Mrs. Josephina, and feeling angry with himself for not being able to rise entirely above these foolish attacks of persons whose judgment he despised, he vented his dissatisfaction by throwing all the blame of what had been done upon his wife, declaring that his judgment had never approved any of these plans of retrenchment which the world so strongly condemned.

Maria made no reply to this charge of her husband's, but by giving him a look, in which he might read how much she felt his ungrateful treatment. She arose soon after, and withdrawing to her child's apartment, there

spent some hours in weeping over her beloved infant, for whose sake she was prepared with pleasure to make far greater sacrifices than those which she had already made. When she went down to tea, Mr. Hunter was gone out; and Mrs. Josephina was also absent, having made an appointment to drink tea with a neighbour.

At supper the party met again; but the husband and wife did not meet in so cheerful a manner as they were wont to approach each other. The traces of tears were left on the features of Maria, and Mr. Hunter hated himself for having occasioned them, but was still withheld by pride from making the reparation which he owed her. In consequence, he appeared sullen and discontented, and sat silent till Mrs. Josephina remarked that there was to be a public dinner the next day at the principal inn. He took no notice of her remark, seeming to be entirely occupied by what he had on his plate. Mrs. Josephina was not, however, to be put off so easily when she had any particular point to carry, as was now the case. She waited till her cousin had swallowed all that was on his plate; and then said, "Charles Hunter, there is a public dinner to-morrow at the Elephant-and-Castle; and your father's friends, Lord H—— and Sir Theophilus D——, will both be present. These are connexions which you ought to cultivate."

Mr. Hunter directed his wife to replenish his plate, without opening his mouth or raising his eyelids; having used for the occasion some one of those many significant gestures which Englishmen find convenient for family purposes, when they happen to be sulky. And having gained his point, he began to eat with apparently renewed appetite, taking no notice whatever of Mrs. Josephina's discourse.

The indefatigable old lady was not, however, disconcerted by this apparent ill-humour, but returning to the charge as soon as the rattle of the plates and knives and forks would permit, she said, "Charles, you will assuredly go to the Elephant-and-Castle to-morrow! You owe it to your family, to keep up these old and honourable connexions."

"I hate public dinners," said Mr. Hunter, without looking off his plate.

"What have your likings and dislikings, cousin Hunter, to do with the point in question?" returned Mrs. Josephina. "A professional man must do many things which he does not like, if he wishes to get on in the world."

An eloquent soliloquy then followed concerning the line of conduct to be pursued by a young man who has his way to make in any genteel profession, which would probably have been protracted to a still greater length, had it not been interrupted by Mr. Hunter, who, having finished his supper, threw down his knife and fork, and declared that he would not be such a slave to the world as his relations would have him to be, were he thereby to become the first professional man in the county. A very hot and unpleasant argument followed upon this, between Mrs. Josephina and Mr. Hunter, which was only concluded by the parties separating for the night.

The next morning Mr. Hunter arose in no better humour than that in which he had retired to his chamber the night before. Nevertheless it now appeared that his cousin's arguments had not been destitute of influence, although he had opposed them with so much violence: for just as he was going down to breakfast, he said somewhat rudely to his wife, "I shall not dine at home to-day;" adding, "let every thing be got ready for my dressing about three o'clock."

At the breakfast-table Mrs. Josephina again referred to the conversation which she had heard abroad concerning her cousin's family retrenchments, confessing with a sigh that she was seriously afflicted by seeing a Hunter reduced to let lodgings.

"Well then, Madam," said Mr. Hunter, rising from his unfinished breakfast, "if it is so, your feelings shall be no longer wounded, for Mrs. Hunter shall this day give her lodger notice to depart." Then addressing himself to his wife, he said, "Maria, you hear what I say, and you will act accordingly." So saying, he quitted the room, shutting the door after him with a violence which resounded through the whole house.

Poor Maria sat for some moments immoveable and lost in thought, till she was roused from her unpleasant reflections by Mrs. Josephina, who, being full of exultation, thus addressed her:—"Well, I must say, Mrs. Hunter, that I do highly commend my cousin Charles

for the resolution which he has taken ; and now that we are alone, I must use the liberty of a friend and near relation to speak my mind to you upon several particulars, which I have more than hinted at before."

Maria made no reply ; for indeed at that moment she dared not trust herself to speak, lest she should utter some intemperate expression.

" My near connexion with your husband, Mrs. Charles Hunter, and the regard I have for him, must plead my excuse," continued Mrs. Josephina, " for the freedom I use. You are young ; you have seen but little of the world ; you know not how every thing which people do is talked over and discussed ; and of what consequence it is that they who have their way to make in life should not do any thing which they would not wish all the world to know."

Maria looked up and sighed, but still remained silent, reflecting with anguish on the happy hours which she had enjoyed with her husband before the worldly sentiments of Mrs. Josephina had crept in to interrupt their domestic peace.

" You do not speak, Mrs. Charles Hunter," said Mrs. Josephina. " You are offended with my freedom ; you do not see it in a right point of view."

Maria at length spoke, and said with much gentleness, " Your near connexion with our family, Madam, and the regard which Mr. Hunter has for you, entitle you to use here all freedom of speech, and I have no right to be offended at any thing you may say ; notwithstanding which, I could have wished, my dear Madam, that you had made yourself acquainted with our affairs before you had given your opinion."

" And pray," said Mrs. Josephina, " what makes you suppose that I am not acquainted with your affairs ? I have talked them thoroughly over with Mr. Charles Hunter's mother. I know your income precisely, and also your prospects ; and this I also know, that if you do not risk a little, you will never get forward in the world. You must live in a suitable way. It is absolutely necessary not to let the world see that you are in the least straitened : you must make a certain appearance ; your husband should frequent public meetings ; you yourself ought to be seen oftener abroad ; you

should pay more attention to your dress ; you ought not to be seen two seasons in the same head-dress ; nor allow yourself to be surprised by a visitor with your child in your arms."

Here Mrs. Josephina paused ; but Maria made no answer for a few moments, being at a loss how to blend respect and firmness in her reply. At length she spoke to this effect.—“ My dear Madam, I have been long silent, because I desired to hear all you had to say ; and now I must request your attention to the simple statement which I am about to make of the principles on which, with the divine blessing, I have hitherto endeavoured to act. In my baptism it was undertaken for me by my sponsors, that I should renounce the *pomps and vanities of this wicked world* ; and when I took upon myself this baptismal vow at my confirmation, I pledged myself, in my own person, really and truly to give up and reject the same. Such being the case, how can I, as a Christian, from any worldly motives or desires of aggrandizement, allow myself those indulgences of dress and company, &c. which are beyond the reach of my fortune, and which I cannot obtain but at the risk of involving my husband's credit, and destroying his peace of mind ?”

Mrs. Josephina appeared for a moment to be somewhat embarrassed by the solemnity of Maria's manner ; but shortly recovering her self-command, and recurring to her old principles, she replied, “ You take this matter up too seriously, Mrs. Charles Hunter ; as if I were proposing something to you contrary to religion. It is very true that we do at our baptism renounce the *pomps and vanities* of this world, and those pomps and vanities are very wicked things, and great snares to many, particularly to persons in the higher ranks of society ; and indeed to the poorer sort—for to see the dress of the poor in these days, so different to what it was in my youth, is certainly very offensive. But, my dear Mrs. Charles Hunter, I cannot see what these things have to do with our present argument. Would you say that every respectable female who does not let her best apartments to a lodger, and who does not make her best bonnet last two summers, is giving way to the love of those *pomps and vanities* of which you speak, and infringing her baptismal vow ?”

Maria replied, with a smile which she could not restrain, although thoroughly discomposed, "I should, of course, my dear Mrs. Josephina, be very absurd," she said, "if I were to draw out one rule of living or one mode of dress for every individual; because I am fully aware, that what is improper in one line of life and in one situation would be no more than decent and necessary in another."

"Certainly," replied the old lady, "every one will allow that a person may exceed in point of show and expence, and this extreme is to be condemned equally with the other, as I but just now hinted in the case of the poor, and of servants in general, who in these days dress quite above their station. But if some fall into the extreme of dress and show, that is no reason why others should run into the other extreme, and sink below their rank in society. A lady should always endeavour to appear like a lady, and never allow herself to fall into the dress and modes of ordinary life."

Maria was silent upon this remark, and Mrs. Josephina proceeded to ring new changes upon the word prudence; the opinion of the world; the necessity of doing as others do, and appearing as others appear; of dressing a little according to the fashion; and of mixing a little freely with society: till Maria, being wearied of the long and fruitless argument, answered her much to the following purpose; after which she withdrew to her own apartment.—"My dear Madam, are we to have no other motives of action than the desire of pleasing the world? are we not immortal creatures? and does not the happiness of our future existence through a long eternity depend upon the manner in which the years of this short life are spent? If in this present state of being we are made regenerate and sanctified, if through the love of our heavenly Father we are accepted in Christ, and renewed in heart and affections through the influences of the Holy Spirit, we may then rest assured of everlasting happiness! because he that has begun the work of our redemption will assuredly carry it on until the end. Now this being the case, wherefore should we desire the vain ornaments and transient distinctions of this present life? We ought rather, with the saints of old, to desire a better country, that is, a heavenly

one: leaving the vanities of life, we should be anxious to seek his favour, who is the Lord our God, and that city which he hath prepared for them that love him. I cannot imagine, my dear Mrs. Josephina, a Christian female taking delight in fashionable dresses, splendid equipages, or showy furniture, let her situation be what it may; these things must ever be condemned by our baptismal vow. But," added Maria, "these vanities are not the only things thus condemned: the instant when I covet such things, or aim at such a mode of living as the Almighty has put out of my reach by lawful means, that moment I infringe my vow. I consider that there is no honour or dignity inherent in any family, by which one man is naturally exalted above another. At the pleasure of the Lord the diadem is removed, and the crown is taken off: he that is low is exalted, and he that is high is abased. If the Lord exalts me, he will, I trust, give me grace to bear my honours meekly: and on the other hand, if he brings me down, if he removes my means of supporting a certain rank in society, I must as a Christian submit cheerfully to his divine will; for the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. I cannot afford to keep two good servants; I must therefore make up the deficiency by my own labour. We found, when we occupied our whole house, that we could not discharge our debts; we therefore gave up a part of our house, and had a redoubled enjoyment of what remained; we were free from debts, and were very happy. O how shall I learn to exchange that peace for the corroding cares attending pecuniary difficulties?"

Here Maria remembering the peace she had lost, began to shed tears; but seeing Mrs. Josephina preparing to speak, she resumed her discourse, resolving at once to say all she had on her mind. "Whatever your opinion may be, my dear Madam, and however successful you may have been in convincing Mr. Hunter, my sentiments on these subjects remain as they were. I consider the Almighty as the fountain of honour; and when he chooses to remove the means of elevation from any family or individual, such persons have no right to consider themselves injured, or to count themselves any way superior to those into whose condition they may have

fallen. What am I, or what is my father's house, otherwise than what the Lord has made us? and if it pleased him to exalt us for some generations, he has now a right to bring us down to a level with those we once counted beneath us. But perhaps," added she, "to speak to the case in point, there has been no real lowering of our situation. When we first set out in life we fell into the prevailing error of fancying ourselves greater than our situation and means entitled us to be; and in consequence rendered those retrenchments necessary which would not have been so had we at first made a just estimate of our rank in life and our means of supporting that rank. I consider the high thoughts which individuals entertain of themselves and of their families, as one of the reigning evils of the present period. In these days all are pressing forward into the rank of those just above them: every young man when entering into life is anxious to live in the same style in which his father lives, after having made his fortune by a long course of labour and privations; and every daughter must enjoy all that indulgence and ease which her mother, perhaps, only began to taste when nearly worn out by a long life of family care.

"From these principles," continued Maria, "are formed the many extravagant wives, careless daughters, and selfish mothers, with which society now abounds. And through the influence of these principles our streets are filled with young women who think it a disgrace to be employed at home; and with mothers who think it a hardship to take care of their own children."

The earnestness with which Maria spoke, had left Mrs. Josephina not a moment to introduce a word; and, on ceasing to speak, she hastily left the room, and ran up stairs to lock herself in her own apartment, where, bursting into tears, she again gave way to an agony of grief. "Oh! how truly," said she, "is it written, that a man's foes shall be they of his own household!" After a time, however, her sorrow having in some degree spent itself, she was brought, through the gracious care of Him who had led her from her youth up, to a candid and impartial examination of her whole conduct throughout this contest with Mrs. Josephina, as well as before the period of her arrival—when He who searcheth all

hearts made her sensible that these present trials were rendered necessary, in order to remove all confidence in her own prudence, and to bring her to a more decided dependence on the divine assistance and direction. And the assurance which was at that time vouchsafed her, that she was in the hands of a tender Father, and that all events would work together for her good, gradually restored her to her accustomed tranquillity; upon which she disposed herself cheerfully to arrange every thing according to her husband's pleasure for his proposed visit.

Mr. Hunter just made his appearance in time to dress for the public dinner to which he was going, and then hurried away without speaking to his wife. Notwithstanding, however, this unkind behaviour, Maria, having invited a good-humoured neighbour to join the dinner party and talk to Mrs. Josephina, was enabled to appear with some composure at the head of her table. The rest of the day passed off tolerably well; Mrs. Josephina, who was perhaps aware that she had gone great lengths in her interference with the family arrangements of her cousin, endeavouring to appear more than ordinarily accommodating. At eleven o'clock, the neighbour took her leave, when Mrs. Josephina and Maria withdrew to their apartments: the servants also were dismissed to their rest, and Maria alone sat up for her husband. He did not appear till twelve. Maria was prepared to receive him cheerfully; but when at length he knocked at the door, she was shocked to observe that he had drank so freely, as scarcely to know what he said. She silently lighted him up stairs, where, throwing himself on his bed, he soon fell asleep.

Maria, being thus again left to her own sorrowful meditations, spent some hours partly in weeping, and partly in prayer to God that it would please him to convince her husband of the error of which he was guilty, by his sinful accommodation to the maxims of the world. At length, being thoroughly exhausted, she sat down upon a low stool at the foot of the bed, near the cradle of her sleeping infant, and laying her head upon a pillow, she presently fell into a deep and refreshing sleep.

In the mean time, Mr. Charles Hunter awoke: and being come to himself, he remembered all that had pass-

ed the day before with shame and self-abhorrence. He arose, and opening the curtains of the window, admitted light enough into the room to discover his child sleeping in its cradle, and his beloved wife reposing by its side, her head resting on the foot of the bed in a deep sleep, while the traces of tears were still left on the cheek which was visible, although a sweet composure was shed over her whole face. Mr. Hunter was not destitute of feeling; he loved and honoured his wife beyond every other person in the world, and was tenderly attached to his child. It was impossible for him to behold these beloved objects thus situated, and to recollect his conduct on the past day, without feeling a degree of remorse and anguish greater than he had ever before experienced; and indeed such was the overpowering nature of his feelings on this occasion, that he stood gazing in silence upon his beloved wife until she awoke—when, throwing himself upon his knees before her, he confessed all his faults, and entreated her forgiveness, assuring her that, with the divine assistance, he never again would allow a third person to interfere between them. He promised also, with God's help, that he would endeavour to reject for ever all worldly motives of conduct, and simply to seek the blessing of God in a Christian course of life.

From that period Mrs. Josephina had no power to disturb the peace of Maria's mind, although her visit was prolonged for some time. When she saw that her cousin Charles was resolved to adhere to his former plans of family management, she ceased to contest the matter under his roof; though abroad she consoled herself among her acquaintance, by representing Mrs. Charles Hunter as a very odd woman, whose influence over her husband would in the end destroy his respectability in society, and sink him entirely into low life.

One year after the departure of Mrs. Josephina, the lady who had occupied the drawing-room and best apartment in Mr. Hunter's house died: and having found both spiritual and temporal relief from the attentions of Maria, she left by her last will three hundred pounds to the family as a testimony of her regard; a circumstance which was very little expected by Maria or Mr. Hunter. About this time also there was a considerable increase

in Mr. Hunter's business; and not long after a distant relation leaving them a few hundred pounds, their income was so much improved, that even Maria did not think it necessary to receive a new inmate into the house. They had now been married nearly four years, and had two children; they were also, by the economy and industry of Maria, free from debt; besides which they were in receipt of such an income as enabled them to live without care in the manner in which they had first set out. Thus, by meeting every difficulty as it arose, this prudent wife had prevented that accumulation of troubles which so often takes place in families where persons are improvident. The present season however had its peculiar employments and adequate duties. Maria's eldest child was three years of age, and it was time to think seriously of forming her temper and habits. The tender mother, having entirely given up the world for herself and her children, now devoted her undivided attention to the great work of leading her little one forward in the paths of righteousness. But as the present narrative is not intended to display a system of education, we shall pass over some of the following years of Maria's life, in which the greater part of her time was devoted to her children, and proceed to that period when her eldest daughter had attained her twelfth year, and when, with the divine blessing upon her mother's careful and prudent management, she was become a very important assistant to that tender parent in the education of her little brothers and sisters, of which there were five younger than herself. Mr. Hunter's family had been for some years returned from Bath, and now resided in the town with him: and although they did not in every point agree with Maria, yet she knew how to mix so much sweetness and family love with the characteristic steadiness of her whole deportment, that they could not but love and respect her more and more, from year to year.

In the mean time, Maria's cousin, of whom we spoke in the beginning of our story, had married a young clergyman of some family and fortune: and although Mrs. Charles Hunter had never seen her since her marriage, she had always kept up a friendly connexion with her by letter. At length it appeared that their early intimacy

was to be renewed : for by the death of the rector of the parish in which Mr. Hunter resided, the living became vacant ; and was at length presented to Mr. Croft, the gentleman who had married Matilda.

Mr. and Mrs. Hunter entertained Mr. Croft when he came to be inducted into his living, as a near relation. And immediately upon his return, Maria received a letter from her cousin, requesting her to execute a variety of commissions, and to make a number of preparations previous to the arrival of herself and family at the parsonage-house, which was an excellent oldfashioned dwelling.

The coming of Mr. and Mrs. Croft was preceded by several boat loads of furniture, the town lying convenient for water carriage : and Maria took the trouble of having every thing arranged in the places specified in Mrs. Croft's letters, in such a manner, and with such exactness, that when the family arrived, they found a clean and well ordered house, instead of an unfurnished dwelling littered with packages. It was late in the evening, when Mr. and Mrs. Croft with their children and servant reached the town : and in the morning, Maria leaving her little substitute to keep order in the school-room, (a task which she could perform on occasion with much satisfaction to her mother,) hastened to pay her respects to the newly arrived family. Her heart beat as she ran up stairs into the breakfast-room, with anxiety to see the companion of her childhood. She was received affectionately by her cousin ; and, after she had kissed the children, four of whom crowded round her, and spoken to Mr. Croft, she had time to look about her, and recollect herself. The party having been tired with their journey, had risen at so late an hour, as not yet to have finished their breakfast. Mr. Croft's family consisted of a boy of about ten years of age, another of five, and two girls of intermediate ages. These children were not absolutely unsightly, but there was no particular trait observable in their countenances at this time, except that of a stupid untaught curiosity, which they expressed by a fixed stare at their stranger cousin. Mrs. Croft had an anxious and melancholy countenance, though she endeavoured to appear cheerful and pleased at the arrival of her cousin. Many family matters and enquiries

about old and new friends employed the attention of the elder part of the company till the children had finished their breakfast; which was no sooner concluded than all quiet was at an end; for Master William, the eldest son, upon swallowing his last mouthful of bread and butter, began his daily occupation of teasing his parents by incessant questions and demands.—“Mamma,” said he, “which is to be my room?”

“It shall be settled by and by, my dear,” replied his mother; “have I not told you so several times before?”

“May I have the little room at the top of the stairs?” proceeded the boy.

“By and by it will be settled,” said his mamma.

“But can’t it be done now?” said the boy; “do let me have the room at the top of the stairs; I don’t like the other.”

“Be quiet now,” said his mother, trying to carry on some discourse with her cousin, and making to herself a merit of bearing patiently, as a part of the necessary evils of life, those importunities which she ought to have put an end to by the exercise of parental authority. By this time the boy was got up, and had taken his station behind his mother’s chair, against which he was drumming with his knee, repeating every moment certain words to this effect, “Mamma, mamma, I say, mamma, which room am I to have? Now, mamma, can’t you tell me? I want to put up my pictures.”

In the mean time the two little girls had risen from their places at the table, the younger of which had seated herself directly opposite to Maria, on whom she was looking with a fixed and vacant gaze, while she picked her teeth with her fingers. The elder at the same time being engaged in unpacking her mamma’s work-basket, scattered the contents upon the table, in order to look for something of her own which she had lost. While the youngest boy was balancing himself upon the window-sill, the window being open; threatening every moment to tilt into the street, at the hazard of his life.

All this time, Mrs. Croft either did not or would not notice what was passing, although, being annoyed by the tremulous motion of her chair, and the incessant demands of her son who stood behind it, she more than once attempted to push him back; but he as often re-

turned to his post with a pertinacity which seemed to gather strength from his mother's weak opposition. At length however the importunities of William becoming altogether intolerable to the indolent mother, she called to his father, who was reading a newspaper, and said, "My dear, I wish you would set William something to do, for he makes me quite nervous." Then turning to her cousin, she said in a whisper, every word of which was well understood by the boy in question, "You must not judge of William by what you now see in him, the dear boy has been quite unsettled by the bustle and confusion in which we have all been involved for some weeks past; he will be quite another thing when he gets to his books."

The mother had scarcely finished this apology for her son's conduct, when the boy made another necessary by a fresh attack upon his mother respecting his room, and a renewal of his drumming upon the back of her chair.

Mr. Croft sat still, regardless of his wife's repeated requests that he would find William something to do, till he had finished the perusal of a protracted debate; then suddenly jumping up, and intimating that he was about to explore the garden and outhouses, he was immediately followed out of the room by all the children.

Mrs. Croft called her daughters back; adding, that she had some employment for them within. But, as it suited not the young ladies to hear her, they did not return; and Maria, although she lamented their disobedience, certainly felt herself relieved by their absence.

In the mean time the two cousins were left to entertain each other. The conversation between Mrs. Croft and Mrs. Hunter consisted of one continued complaint concerning the miseries of human life on the part of the former, and expressions of amazement on the part of the latter.

Mrs. Croft first spoke of the pecuniary difficulties in which she and her husband had been involved ever since their marriage; and from which, she said, they were not yet extricated, nor likely to be so, even by the good living of which they had just come into possession. "For

you know, cousin Maria," said Mrs. Croft, "that we must live up to our income; it will be expected of us by the town; and how are we to pay our debts?"

"Debts!" repeated Mrs. Hunter.

"Yes," said the other. "We began life with so small an income, and children came so fast, that we found it impossible to avoid incurring considerable debts. We had only four hundred a year for the first three years. Mr. Croft was obliged to keep a horse and a man-servant; it was impossible to do without a cook and house-maid; and to these a nurse-maid was added as soon as William was born—for you know I could not nurse the child myself; *that* was quite out of the question. I had also very indifferent health after my marriage; and there is nothing in the world so fatiguing as carrying about a great heavy child."

"It is certainly fatiguing," said Mrs. Hunter; "so much so, that I used, when I could not afford to keep a servant expressly for the child, very often to relieve myself by sending the servant to walk out with the infant while I did the household work."

Mrs. Croft stared as if she had never heard any thing like this in her life before, and said, "You always had an extraordinary fine constitution; but few mothers can bear such fatigue."

The conversation next turned upon education; when Mrs. Croft declared herself totally unequal to any labours of that kind. "Children," said she, "you know, are so very tiresome. William is a well-disposed boy, but he is so fatiguing: and indeed so are all children. But Mr. Croft hates schools; and certainly they are very expensive: though I should not like to have a governess in the house." She finished by a long and pathetic lamentation on the cares, difficulties, and pains, of a married life; to which Mrs. Hunter knew not what answer to make. At length she smilingly said, "My dear cousin, we must not indulge ourselves in these complaints in the hearing of strangers, lest we should lead our neighbours to think we have been unfortunate in marriage."

What answer Mrs. Croft might have made to this speech Mrs. Hunter did not know; for the bursting in of the whole brood of neglected and rude children, followed by their father, who was grumbling at some mis-

demeanour of William's, and threatening a horse-whip, (which however he failed to apply,) put an end to all conversation.

Mrs. Hunter hoped that when the family should be more settled in its new situation, it would assume a more comfortable and orderly appearance. But day after day she witnessed the same scenes of turbulence on the part of the children, and of murmuring on that of the mother; and she was sorry, at length, to be convinced that her cousin had neglected the duties of a wife and mother, and had omitted her little daily tasks of economy, personal labour, and mental exertion, until her difficulties were become so complicated as to leave very little hope, humanly speaking, of her ever being able to surmount them. The world also exercised a strong control over her; as indeed is usually the case with all indolent minds. She was a great gossip in a quiet way; and in consequence she heard much of the common subjects of discourse in the town. And as it is natural for us to think of what we hear, it was not wonderful that she thought much of dress and appearance, and had no power to resist the allurements of these, either for herself or her children: notwithstanding all which, she seemed to have some desire to be thought religious—she even thought herself so in some good degree, and spoke of her children as of young people who had a considerable share of piety. Maria perceived her difficulties, and pitied that weakness which she attributed to the softness and tenderness of her early education. She was careful however not to exult over her, as we too naturally do over those who appear not to have succeeded so well in the world as ourselves: on the contrary, she was continually forming plans and contrivances to assist her. But no assistance given to the indolent can be effectual. Maria frequently invited one or other of her cousin's daughters to her house, where she gave them every instruction in her power, and kept them as long as their parents would spare them. But all she did for them abroad was undone at home by the listless and worldly spirit of the mother: till Maria was at length obliged to give up her generous efforts of assisting her cousin, lest she should injure her own lovely family by too frequent evil communication.

The end of these two families was such as might be expected. The young Crofts grew up to be commonplace men and women: the girls were pert and useless, possessing very inferior attainments; and the boys turned out mere men of the world; so that none of them afforded any comfort to the declining years of their parents. While the lovely family of the virtuous and active Maria arose up to call their parents blessed; and their children's children were brought up upon their knees.

The lady of the manor here closed the history of Maria; when all her young auditors exclaimed with one voice, that they thought it a very interesting and profitable story, and hoped that when they married and had families they should remember Maria and be the better for her example.

“And so,” said the lady of the manor, “you are determined not to be the better for this story till you are married!”

“How can we profit by it now?” said one or two of the young people in a breath. “We have no husbands, no children, no servants, to manage now.”

“You have not, it is true, my dear young friends,” replied the lady of the manor, “any of these things. But, like Maria, each of you have some specific duties which cannot be properly performed without renouncing the pomps and vanities of this world. All of you have parents, whose interests and pleasure it is as much your duty to consult and promote, as it was Maria’s to study those of her husband. Many of you press hard upon your parents’ purses to provide you with new and fashionable dresses, trinkets, and amusements. And those among you whose parents are rich, by the indulgence of fancied wants and vain pursuits, are robbing the poor of what might be given in charity. There is no situation, no age, no rank, my dear young people, which can justify a female in pursuing the vanities of dress and appearance.”

Here the lady of the manor, looking at her watch, was surprised to find that the usual hour for the young ladies returning home was considerably passed. She therefore broke off her discourse somewhat abruptly; adding, that she had much more to say on the very fertile subject of the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, but that, as

the evening was so far advanced, she must postpone the remainder of her discourse till their next meeting. She then knelt down to prayer, the young people gathering round, and joining her in that devotional act with much apparent humility and sincerity of heart.

*Prayer of the Lady of the Manor on the Renunciation of the Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World.*

“ O THOU high and mighty one, who inhabitest eternity, thou glorious and mysterious Three in One, whom we adore, look down with pity upon us thy poor dependent creatures who are now assembled at the footstool of thy throne. We do not presume to approach thee in our own names, or confiding in our own merits; for we are indeed vile and abominable—creatures of unclean lips, and utterly unworthy. But we draw nigh unto thee, depending upon the merits of our Saviour, on whom alone we place all our hope of acceptance. For his sake, therefore, O Lord, grant us that favour which we are at this time more especially led to supplicate at thy hand. We are, O Lord, aware of the peculiar weakness of our sex in its liability to be attracted by the empty pomps and vanities of this world—we own our attachment to these worthless things; we confess their power over our hearts; and we desire to be set free from their contemptible and degrading influence. We know, O Lord, that without thy assistance we shall be utterly incapable of breaking their yoke from off our necks, or of renouncing in any degree their dominion over us: and although we are convinced that by gaining the whole world, and losing our own soul, we should be nothing profited—but on the contrary rendered everlasting and unspeakably miserable—yet such is the power of sin over our hearts, that all resistance to it must prove utterly ineffectual, if help is not given us from on high. We therefore humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, to grant that we may not be numbered among the vain, the gay, and the sinful daughters of the world; but that, being separated from these, we may devote the days of health, of youth, and freedom from care, not to the vain pleasures and pomps of this world, but to the acquirement of such habits, and the attainment of such

knowledge, as may make us useful members of society, and faithful servants of thy dear Son, in whatsoever situations it may please thee, O Lord, to establish us.

“And now to God the Father,” &c.

## CHAPTER VI.

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*Second Conversation on the Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World.*

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THE young people being met together once more at the manor-house, the lady of the manor thus addressed them:—

“ My dear young friends,” she said, “ since you did not seem to feel the case of Maria, as being a married woman, so exactly adapted to your own present situations as I could wish, I shall this day entertain you with a story upon the same subject, namely, the renunciation of the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, which, as it refers to a very young and unmarried person, will I trust be found more applicable to your own cases.

“ It may appear to you, from the history of Maria, that her self-denial was the less praiseworthy because it was necessary to the well-being of her family. I am now going to bring before you an instance in which economy and self-denial were practised, I will not say from higher motives than those of Maria, but from motives in which self-interest could have no part, and in a sphere of life in which self-denial seldom forms a feature of the character.” The lady of the manor then unfolded her manuscript, and read as follows.

*The Economy of Charity.*

Lady Harriet Mowbray, a daughter of the Earl of G—, was left a widow, at the age of thirty-five, with two sons and four daughters. Her circumstances were good: but in order to increase the fortunes of her younger children, though they were not unhandsomely

provided for by their father, she gave up her town-house immediately after the death of her husband, and retired to a beautiful country-house, which was in the possession of the family, in one of the most picturesque counties of England. In this retirement, with her six children, their governess, and tutor, she passed her time in such a way as a prudent worldly character might be expected to do: in paying some attention to the improvement of her children, in cultivating an acquaintance with a few reputable families in the neighbourhood, in performing occasional acts of charity, and in making filagree screens and boxes of card-board.

The names of Lady Harriet's daughters were, Jane, Celia, Dorothea, and Fanny; and Miss Hartley was the governess appointed to take the charge of these young ladies. Her sons were Robert and Gerard. In addition to this family, there was a niece of Lady Harriet, a young lady who, having lost her parents, was received into her aunt's family to be educated with her cousins. She was one year younger than Dorothea, the third daughter of Lady Harriet, and bore so strong a family resemblance to her young relations, that she commonly passed among them as a fifth sister. The name of this young lady was Margarita; and although deprived of her parents, she was in other respects well provided for, having a very sufficient property settled upon her.

Having now introduced my readers to some of the personages who are to make the principal figures in my history, I proceed to describe their modes of life and usual habits.

Lady Harriet rose late, and those who visited her in a morning generally found her sitting in her drawing-room in an elegant *dishabille*, having a table before her scattered over with specimens of gilt and coloured papers, half-finished drawings, the latest pamphlets and novels, pencils, pens, card-paper, and crayons: all of which gave a certain air of *je ne scai quoi* to the apartment, and afforded occasion to many persons to say, "What an accomplished woman is Lady Harriet Mowbray!"

In summer-time the windows of this drawing-room were always thrown up, their upper compartments being shaded by Venetian blinds: and the view from these windows was so remarkably beautiful as to give a peculiar charm

to the apartment; while the odour of many fragrant flowers, placed in vases in different parts of the room, and the warbling of various birds on the trees without, were calculated to furnish as delightful a feast to some of the other senses, as those which were here provided for the gratification of the eye. The objects seen from the window were, a lawn, which sloped down to a large and noble piece of water, encircled by trees, many of which were exotic; and beyond these, certain woody knolls, intersected by small valleys, marked to the eye by their deeper shade. A blue upland in the remotest distance finished this exquisite picture.

A very great degree of sense, judgment, wit, beauty, and sprightliness, was certainly not necessary to set off a lady of high rank, elegantly dressed, and desiring to make herself agreeable in a situation like this; especially as most of her visitors were common characters, and as Lady Harriet could, often did, speak very eloquently on the subject of maternal tenderness, &c. &c. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, if she was held forth in the neighbourhood as the very prototype of *La bonne mere de Madame Genlis*, although it often happened, that she did not see her children during more than an hour in the morning, and in an evening only for that interval when they were permitted to be present in the dining-room and drawing-room; leaving them in the mean time to an inexperienced governess, who, although mistress of some accomplishments, had not the smallest idea of forming the mind, directing the principles, or even making the best of her pupils' time in an ordinary way. With respect to religion, Miss Hartley knew nothing but its most common forms; and as to neatness, order, and economy, this director of youth had as little notion of these good qualities as of algebra or conic sections. With such a head, we may imagine that the school-room and sleeping-apartments belonging to these young ladies exhibited no very striking specimens of accurate arrangement: but as the young people were profusely supplied with books, paper, materials for drawing, toys, and trinkets, every place which they occupied was scattered with these articles, many of them in a torn and dilapidated state, and not a few utterly destroyed.

If we consider that what children are with respect to

their books and toys, they will probably hereafter become with regard to their more important possessions, and that the same unprincipled carelessness which renders them incapable of arranging a cabinet, or taking care of a drawing-box, will hereafter disqualify them for managing an estate or ordering a family—in this view of the case, instead of making vain and foolish excuses for their carelessness, we ought to set ourselves strenuously to correct it, and to subdue the disposition from which it proceeds. It is impossible indeed for the most pious and careful parent to change the heart of a young person, or to make him a lover of God who by nature is a child of wrath: this must be the work of a more powerful hand than that of man. But decent, orderly, and economical habits may be induced by the parent or teacher; and surely, when grace is given, these will smooth the way to the acquirement of those humble, Christian modes of conduct, and that scriptural self-denial, without which the Christian character displays a degree of inconsistency discernible to every eye. But leaving these reflections, I shall now proceed to that period of my history when the eldest daughter of Lady Harriet had attained her thirteenth year, and Fanny, the youngest child of the family, her ninth.

At this period these young people, when dressed for company and in their best mood, presented so pretty a family group, that Lady Harriet insisted upon having them all exhibited in a large painting, to be placed over the chimney-piece of the great dining-room: and as the artist executed his work with some taste, Lady Harriet was not a little pleased with the performance; especially as she herself appeared, in a conspicuous part of the picture, to much advantage in her favourite character of *La bonne mere*. These children were all extremely fair, had beautiful light hair, together with that air of ease and superior breeding which is rarely discoverable among persons in low life; because young people being extremely imitative, how carefully soever they may be educated in inferior society, they will unavoidably copy the ordinary manners of those with whom they converse. But inasmuch as coarse manners are not a necessary accompaniment of humble life, we may hope that, as religious feeling makes its way in society, a better style

of manners may also prevail among the lower orders ; in which case we shall see elegance united with indigence, and the shepherdess of a fanciful Arcadia actually inhabiting the rustic cottage in our own neighbourhood.

But notwithstanding the apparent elegance and delicacy of these young people, the two elder, especially, were ordinary characters, and the youngest a little spoiled favourite : while Dorothea, who had more mental energy than her sisters, displayed that energy in a thousand caprices, by which she continually risked the anger of her governess, the censures of her mother, and the displeasure of her sisters. But as none of these things gave occasion to the adoption of such measures as might have effectually corrected her evil habits, she regarded every body about her with utter contempt, pursuing her own devices in that way which most pleased or best suited her at the moment. Margarita, who differed, as I before said, from her cousins so slightly in appearance as always to pass with strangers as one of the family, (though on a closer inspection there was much greater animation in her eyes, and much more spirit in her general physiognomy,) made her way with the rest as well as could be expected ; being sometimes the companion of Dorothea's whims, and sometimes an imitator of her more demure sisters.

Nevertheless, as Miss Hartley was unable to persuade herself that Lady Harriet could possibly love her niece as well as her own children, and as this young lady's attentions to each individual were always duly weighed and measured by what she conceived to be Lady Harriet's feelings towards that individual, she made a point of laying every misdemeanour of her pupils to the door of Margarita ; so that, whenever Lady Harriet had occasion to find fault, Miss Hartley never failed to fix the blame on Miss Margarita, though in a manner so artful and wily, that Lady Harriet seldom observed this manœuvre. If a book was torn, Miss Hartley would say, "I think that was the book Miss Margarita was reading last." If any trinket was lost or broken, Miss Hartley would say very quietly, "Did I not see you with it, Miss Margarita, the other day ?"

Lady Harriet on these occasions would not seldom say, "Margarita is a very careless girl ; I shall be much

displeased if she does not henceforward take more care."

The treatment which little Margarita had to endure was, in fact, not very severe, but it had nevertheless, from its continual pressure, a considerable effect on her character, which was decidedly more serious than that of her cousins; and as she advanced in years this thoughtfulness increased.

About the time of which we are speaking, an elderly lady, an aunt of Lady Harriet's, and one who, from her residence at Windsor, was much acquainted with what was going forward at court, came to pay a long visit at Mowbray-hall; for such was the name of Lady Harriet's residence. This lady had many intimate acquaintances among the pious people of that day. Sunday-schools, and works of the same tendency, were at this period just coming as it were into fashion; or rather, I should say, that at this period there appeared the dawn of that light which we trust will still increase until it shall have attained unto the glory of a perfect day. A little before this old lady (by name Lady Susan King) left Windsor, Her Majesty Queen Charlotte had expressed a wish for a practical book on the proper method of distributing and regulating charity, and had desired that excellent woman, Mrs. Trimmer, to write and publish a work on this subject. A work, entitled *The Economy of Charity*, was accordingly written and published pursuant to the desire of Her Majesty; and this having just made its appearance in the great world, had afforded much subject of discourse, not only to those ladies of the first circles who really had it at heart to do the most extensive good, but also to those who particularly wished to be thought charitable and humane. Among the first of these two descriptions was Lady Susan; it therefore cannot be wondered at if the economy of charity and other subjects suggested by this little work supplied many topics of conversation to Lady Susan during her visit. Now Lady Harriet, though neither possessing the piety nor the benevolence of her aunt, was at once too polite and too anxious to be in the fashion, not to endeavour to appear deeply interested in the subject. To do her justice, however, we may also add, that she had some pressing desire to do good among her poor neighbours; and there was some-

thing wonderfully agreeable in the idea of doing a vast deal of good at a very little expence. But this lady never took into consideration that the very ground-work of a system for doing good with little money, must be formed on the idea that *time*, *thought*, and *ingenuity* are to be exercised, in order to render such plans of economy in any good degree effectual: for had she considered this, she would no doubt have shrunk at once from a system which demanded a still greater sacrifice than that of money. However, as I before said, this newly published work, this book which was written at the express request of Her Majesty, afforded much subject of discourse at Mowbray-hall during Lady Susan's visit. And as one good thing frequently leads to another, Lady Susan took this occasion to speak to her niece on several other subjects having a particular reference to charity, self-denial, and other duties of a like nature. Lady Susan on one occasion began her discourse by speaking of the true source of charity, which she maintained was self-denial. Whence she proceeded to remark, that, with respect to her own sex, the love of dress, or the ardent desire of ornamenting their own persons, was the passion which dried up the fountain of charity in the larger number of female hearts.

“ Fy ! Lady Susan,” said Lady Harriet, “ thus to disparage our sex; are there not many fine gentlemen about town, and even in the country, who are quite as fond of dress as the ladies ? ”

“ There is no general rule without many exceptions,” remarked Lady Susan; “ but the love of dress is considered as contemptible in the other sex, you must allow, Lady Harriet, and men are in general ashamed of it. On the contrary, when a young woman is found to have no taste for adorning her person, she is universally condemned.”

“ And very properly so,” returned Lady Harriet, “ for of all things on earth nothing is so detestable as a slovenly female.”

“ I fully agree with you in that remark,” said Lady Susan, “ and on that very account I dislike a woman who is fond of dress; for the private habits of such persons are almost invariably slatternly.”

“ I am very glad, my good aunt,” replied Lady Harriet,

"that it was not a gentleman who made that remark: whatever man had dared to utter it, would assuredly have incurred the utmost extent of my displeasure."

The old lady smiled, and replied, "No gentleman of course would be so impolite as to use any such freedom in your presence."

"But, dear Lady Susan, do you make this remark from observation? do you really believe it to be true?" returned Lady Harriet.

"In our rank of life, my dear niece," said Lady Susan, "where every lady is provided with a waiting-maid, this effect of the love of dress is not so easy to be observed. A young lady who has a number of attendants to correct her deficiencies of neatness, may be habitually slatternly, and yet appear only to be politely and elegantly careless. But be assured, on descending into lower life, we should find, that the finest ladies abroad are commonly the most slovenly at home; and that the female who is most elaborately adorned in her drawing-room is frequently the most negligent in her private apartments."

"A new idea this, Lady Susan," said Lady Harriet; "I must consider the doctrine a little before I insert it in my creed."

Lady Susan took no notice of this remark or the ironical manner in which it was uttered, but proceeded to lament the increasing love of dress in the present age. "When I was a child," said she, "that is, forty or fifty years ago, the usual dress of a cottager was a striped woollen jacket and petticoat; a blue apron; a check handkerchief; short sleeves, by which the arm was left bare for hard work; the hair tightly combed up under a clean mob cap; and a flat felt hat. But now, the granddaughters of the good women who wore the dress I have described, appear in printed cotton gowns, with long sleeves, the ends of which are dipped into every thing about which their hands are employed; their long hair in curl-papers; dirty muslin caps; and straw bonnets with faded ribbons—and to go a little higher, the servant whose station would formerly have entitled her to a brown stuff gown and clean check apron, now appears in such mode and fashion of dress as her master's daughter would in time past have thought quite sufficient for her Sunday appearance. If we go higher still, the

little tradesman's wife dresses as the Squire's lady would formerly have done; the lady of the Squire imitates the Viscountess; the Viscountess the Duchess; and the Duchess the Princess. Thus the rage for personal ornament universally prevails, producing in every rank of society evils of less or greater magnitude. The love of dress in the lowest ranks," continued Lady Susan, "and in those somewhat above the lowest, is productive perhaps of more gross vice than any other passion whatever. There are no lengths of sin to which the daughters of the poor are not continually led by this inducement. Much has been said, much has been written on this subject; but as yet the evil continues to rage with increasing violence, to the subversion of order and happiness, and will continue so to do, till the higher classes make a stand and render the love of ornament contemptible and disgraceful by the display of a better taste. The effects of the love of dress," continued the old lady, "in young females of the middle classes and of moderate fortunes are not so grossly immoral, it is true, as among the lowest classes; that is, it does not produce absolutely criminal conduct, or bring the parties to open shame. But I am sorry to see, that even in the middle classes of society, young females are in general so much occupied by dress, that the greater part of their time, their thoughts, and the whole of their pocket-money, are sacrificed to it. The love of dress makes them selfish in the extreme; not only rendering them careless of the poor, but often leading them to press their parents beyond what is convenient in affording them the means of indulging this passion. Those precious hours which might be so usefully employed in the service of God, and those powers of mind which are capable of a progressive improvement to all eternity, are all sacrificed by them to this one silly desire, not merely of putting on a suitable appearance, or of making a respectable figure in the world, but of ornamenting, varying, and new modelling their clothes, without any reference to that which is pure, that which is lovely, or that which is of good report. And I wish," continued Lady Susan, "that truth would permit me to say, that young or single women only are liable to this kind of folly: but neither age, nor inconvenient circumstances, nor natural

deformity, are sufficient to render women rational on these subjects. How often have we reason to deplore the selfishness of mothers of families displayed on these occasions ! and how often do we see the love of dress indulged at the expence of a husband who is perhaps wearing out his constitution in exertions to provide a comfortable maintenance for his household ! ”

“ In the still higher classes of life,” continued Lady Susan, “ we may trace the ruin of families too often to that female vanity which is displayed in the love of dress, where the lady expends what would almost maintain her household, at the milliner’s and jeweller’s ; not to calculate the mischief she does by her example, and the encouragement she gives to the same vanity in all her dependents.”

“ Well but, my dear aunt,” said Lady Harriet, “ what would become of our tradesmen and manufacturers, if you could persuade all our young people to lay by their pocket-money, instead of spending it upon their own pretty persons ? what a strange revolution would your system make in the state of the nation ? ”

Lady Susan, smiling with much good-humour, thus replied : “ Dear niece, far be from me the wish to injure my country, or to hurt a single individual of its inhabitants. On the contrary, I would not desire the females of the present age to spend one farthing less with their tradespeople ; but I would wish those who have more than is requisite for themselves, to devote their surplus in clothing the widow and the fatherless : and I ask you, my dear niece, if I have fifty pounds to spend with my mercer, does it much matter to him, or to the interest of trade in general, if I spend it in coarse cloth instead of cambric, or in ordinary prints instead of superfine ? ”

“ O, but,” said Lady Harriet, “ there are all my dear friends the milliners in Bond-street, and elsewhere, Madame Blonde and Madame la Fleur, with a thousand others ; besides all the pretty little dress-makers and sempstresses about town ; what is to become of them ? ”

“ Why,” returned Lady Susan, “ if the same money is to be spent by our young ladies, though on different objects, according to my new plan, we must engage some of these hands, which are thus thrown out of employment, either in working for the poor, or instructing them in

reading and needle-work. Remember, my dear niece, that I am not advising our young ladies to lay by their money, but to employ it in a new channel."

"Very good!" said Lady Harriet, smiling; "excellent, indeed! Well, I heartily wish that you and the philanthropic Mrs. Trimmer may be able, between you, to make *The Economy of Charity* a favourite study of our young people; and if you will provide for the little dress-makers and my dear Madame la Blonde, I shall make no objection to this new order of things. But I think you should begin by establishing some sumptuary laws, and by fixing upon some form of dress from which no variation must on any account be allowed."

Lady Susan courteously listened, while her niece continued to this effect:—"But, my dear aunt, you must permit me, as the mother of four unmarried daughters, to request that this new attire may be very becoming. Let us have something very picturesque, I beseech you. Do not dress us all like Quakers, I very earnestly entreat you. Think what my sufferings would be, if compelled to introduce my daughters at court in quilled mobs and night-gowns of *Gros de Naples de Tourterelle*."

Lady Susan made no answer, no doubt thinking that she had already said enough, as her auditor was in that kind of mood which inclines persons to turn every thing they hear into ridicule. And when she left Mowbray-hall, which was shortly afterwards, she perhaps went away persuaded that she might have spared herself the expence of presenting *The Economy of Charity* to Lady Harriet, which she had done on her first arrival in the country, having previously taken care to have it bound in such a manner as might not disgrace her niece's elegant work-table. But the Holy Bible saith, *Cast thy bread on the waters, and after many days thou shalt find it.* And this, as will after appear, was the case with the excellent Lady Susan.

We now, however, proceed with our history of *The Economy of Charity*.—After Lady Susan had left Mowbray-hall, this volume lay on Lady Harriet's table in her drawing-room till her bookseller sent her an assortment of new novels from town. On which occasion it was thrown upon an elegant little book-case in the same room; where it probably might have remained for some time, if Master Ro-

bert, wanting some amusement, and having no better at hand, had not taken it into his head, one afternoon, to reach it down from the shelf; when, having turned over its leaves for some time, he bethought himself of drawing the semblance of a cat precisely over the place where his aunt's name was written. This piece of unmannerly wit having been observed by his sister Dorothea, she carried the book up in high glee into the school-room, and handed it round to the whole party, unchecked by Miss Hartley, who was by no means attached to Lady Susan, whose sentiments, she said, were very uncommon, and quite out of date.

When Master Robert's wit had afforded merriment to his sisters for about a week, it became as much out of date as *The Economy of Charity* itself, and the book which contained this inimitable sample of the young gentleman's refined satire was again forgotten and thrown aside into a cupboard in the school-room, which contained a heterogeneous assortment of broken toys, torn books, and cracked slates.

Some time after this, during the interval of a deep snow which confined the young people for many days to the house, little Margarita, who was commonly made accountable for every thing of any consequence that was lost in the school-room, was one day searching for some stray article in this grand repository of rubbish, when she was led to open this book of which we have spoken so frequently; and being attracted by the story of a poor woman, therein related, who brought her child to school in a dress entirely composed of patches, she put the book by, and from that time for many days devoted every spare moment to the reading of it; her young mind, by the divine blessing, being quite occupied with the ideas it suggested.

Margarita was at this time about twelve years of age; a period when the mind often opens rapidly, and when children often begin to think and act for themselves. "What book is that, Miss Margarita," said Miss Hartley, one day, to the little girl, "which you are puzzling over there from morning till night?"

"*The Economy of Charity*, Ma'am," replied Margarita.

"*The Economy of Charity*!" repeated Miss Hartley: "what nonsense! The most economical way of being

charitable is, in my opinion, to keep every thing for ourselves. Charity begins at home, they say ; and so does economy : the person therefore who takes the best care of himself is the one, I should think, who best understands the economy of charity." So saying, she laughed heartily, and was joined by all her pupils except Margarita, who simply answered, as she turned over the leaves of the book, "No, Ma'am, that is not the meaning of it: *The Economy of Charity* is about the way to do good without spending money."

"Yes, yes," said Miss Hartley, renewing her laughter, "I understand it—doing good without spending money: we can all comprehend this secret—doing good to ourselves, and keeping our money in our pockets into the bargain."

"But, Ma'am," said Margarita, "it is dedicated to the queen!"

"Well, and so it should be," replied Miss Hartley. "I am sure, if I were a queen, I would patronize that book."

From this time, as often as Margarita took up the book in question, she became the object of Miss Hartley's jests: but she had been so much used to be laughed at by Miss Hartley, that her merriment now affected her the less. Dorothea was the only one of her cousins to whom Margarita was in the habit of speaking with confidence. Dorothea was sometimes good-tempered, though full of levity; and although she would often join in a laugh against Margarita, yet she generally took her part when in distress. It was therefore natural for her to impart to this her young companion the new ideas which *The Economy of Charity* had suggested; and accordingly, the first day when the weather would permit them to walk out, she thus addressed her.—"I wish, Dorothea," said she, "I wish you would read that book."

"What book?" said the other.

"I mean Mrs. Trimmer's book: *The Economy of Charity*."

"O! the book Robert calls the Cat-Book?" said Dorothea.

"Yes," replied Margarita, smiling; "you cannot think how pretty it is. There are so many nice stories in it; and I have been thinking I should like to do the same."

"What do you mean?" said Dorothea.

"O, I mean," replied Margarita, "that I should like to do the same things as the ladies in that book."

"What things?" said Dorothea.

"I mean," said Margarita, "to save money, and take care of my things, that I may do good."

Dorothea stared with all her might; (for genteel young ladies sometimes stare, or, at least, young ladies of genteel families;) and then, uttering a loud laugh, she called to her governess, who was a little before, saying, "Hartley, I say, Hartley, do you know what Margarita says?—she wants to save her money to do good, like the ladies in *The Economy of Charity*."

"The economy of nonsense," repeated Miss Hartley; "I am sick of the very name of that book. I beg, Miss Margarita, that we may hear no more of it: I believe I shall burn it the next time that I can lay my hands upon it."

"I will take care that you shall not lay your hands on it, then," muttered Margarita.

"Que marmottez vous là Mademoiselle?" said Miss Hartley.

"Nothing, nothing," said Dorothea, good-humouredly, placing her hand on her cousin's mouth, and drawing her a little back, adding these words: "Come, now, Margarita, don't be angry with me; for I am sure you are. I only wanted to tease you a little: and now, to make it up, I will hear all you have to say."

"Well, I was going to tell you," said the little girl, "that I want to save some of my money, in order to do good with it: and I think that I could very soon save enough to put some poor little girl to school."

"To school?" said Dorothea; "to what school? Do you mean the boarding-school at S—, where the two Miss Dalzels are?"

"No, no," said Margarita, "to be sure I do not; that is a school for gentlemen's daughters: I mean such a little school as Mrs. Green's, at the lodge in the park. Mrs. Green receives only four-pence a week for each scholar. I enquired of the house-maid, and she told me so: and four-pence a week only comes to seventeen shillings and four-pence a year. Why, Dorothea, I spent twice that sum when I was last at I—, in buying my wax doll, which Robert broke; and my doll's cradle, and the set of

tea-things which Fanny threw down on Celia's birth-day ; and some other little things which I have lost."

" But I don't see any use in putting children to such a school as Jenny Green's," said Dorothea. " What can they learn there ? "

" O, I don't know," said Margarita : " but Mrs. Green teaches them something, I dare say."

" But four-pence a week !" returned Dorothea ; " who will thank you for paying four-pence a week for them ? It is so very little, any body can pay four-pence a week, if they want their children to go to school."

" O ! but *The Economy of Charity* says, that some poor people cannot pay even four-pence a week for their children's schooling, though they would like them to be taught."

" Don't say, ' *The Economy of Charity*,' Margarita," replied Dorothea, " say, ' *The Cat-Book*.' "

" I do not care what you call the book," replied Margarita, reddening, " nor do I mind your laughter ; I still say, that I should like to put a little child to school."

" I am sure I don't want to hinder you," replied Dorothea. " But of this I am certain, that old Dame Green cannot teach the children any thing worth learning."

" Now, Dorothea," replied Margarita, " if you will persuade Miss Hartley, the next fine morning, to take us a walk to the end of the park, towards Mrs. Green's, I will forgive you all your laughter."

" Well, I will," said Dorothea : " so now be in a good humour, Margarita ; for, to tell you the truth, you look very cross."

" No, not cross," replied the other ; " only I am thinking about putting this child to school."

Thus ended the conversation ; for at that moment Master Robert shook a bough of a high shrub, that was covered with small icicles, over the two little girls, which made them run up for protection to the party before.

A few days after this, on occasion of a hard frost and sunny morning, Margarita reminded Dorothea of her promise to solicit Miss Hartley to take them to the end of the park. The young lady, accordingly, being seated by Miss Hartley, began cautiously to bring the matter about : for she had found out by long experience, that crooked ways commonly answered better with her governess than

straight-forward dealings. And thus this young lady was early taught to practise dissimulation by the capricious temper of her tutoress.—“It is a fine day, Miss Hartley,” said she; “you must take us a very long walk this morning.”

“No, indeed,” said Miss Hartley; “don’t mention such a thing. I shall perish with cold, if I go an inch further than the long south wall of the kitchen-garden.”

On hearing this, Miss Dorothea pouted out her lips, threw down her work, and began to beat the legs of the table with her feet as if she had been practising upon a drum with them.

“Sit still, Miss Dorothea,” said Miss Hartley.

“I cannot sit still,” said the young lady. “I want to take a long walk. I shall not be quiet to-day. If I do not take some means to tire my feet they will not be still.”

“How ridiculous!” said Miss Hartley.

“It’s very true, notwithstanding,” said Miss Dorothea; “I must walk, or I shall be on the fidgets all day.”

Miss Hartley again expressed her dissatisfaction: on which, Dorothea contrived to give the table such a jerk as nearly to overset it; and actually did so far succeed as to throw all that was upon it on her sisters’ laps. At this the young ladies laughed heartily; and as Miss Hartley joined in the laugh, Dorothea gained her point, and the walk into the park was determined upon.

As soon as the little party were out of the shrubbery and had entered the park, Dorothea and Margarita separating themselves a little from the rest of the party, Margarita congratulated her cousin upon the skill with which she had carried her point; after which she began to open to her the little plaus she had formed about her poor child.—“I have thought of a child,” she said. “It is the poor woman’s daughter who weeds in the shrubbery; old Martha Lawley the widow, you know; who is so civil when we go by, and courtesies so very low. She has one little grandchild, who stands by her and carries away the weeds, little Rachel Careless; I asked her name one day. She is a pretty little girl; but I don’t think she can read. You know whom I mean, Dorothea, you have seen her a thousand times. She wears a little old straw hat; you must have seen her.”

“To be sure I have,” said Dorothea: “do you think I

have no eyes ? I have seen her ten thousand times ! But you call her little, she is nearly as big as yourself."

" Well, that will not signify," said Margarita.

" Think of my tilting the table over," said Dorothea. " Did you not laugh when you saw all the things sliding down so nicely ? I only wish Miss Hartley's china ink-stand had been upon it. O ! with what glee should I have seen it go smash upon the floor ! She is so proud of that inkstand !"

Margarita made no direct answer to Dorothea's last speech ; although she heard it with her ears, it made no impression on her understanding ; for it had happened, or rather I should say, it had been so ordered by Providence, that this same *Economy of Charity* so filled this little girl's mind with the desire of discovering if she could not do some good to the poor, that just at this time she could neither talk nor think of any thing but what had some reference to this subject.—" I have got eleven shillings left," she said, " of the present Lady Susan made me ; and I shall have a guinea at Christmas—you know my aunt Mowbray always gives us a guinea apiece at Christmas ; and I will lay it out in a frock for Rachel Careless."

" You are mad, Margarita ! quite mad !" said Dorothea, laughing ; " raving mad !" And so saying, she took up a handful of decaying leaves which were lying by the foot-path, and showered them all over her cousin ; adding, " I wish they were so many penny-pieces to help forward your *Economy of Charity* !"

" Thank you, Miss Dorothea," said Margarita, laughing and running away. " I shall have pence enough for what I want, without wishing the leaves of the trees to be turned into money."

The little party continued their course to the utmost extent of the park, under groves of trees which were then leafless, but which in the summer afforded a shade impervious to the hottest rays of the mid-day sun ; and over spacious lawns, across which the timid deer viewed them from a distance ; not to speak of sundry dells and dingles, glades, and bowers, in which the fairy queen might be supposed to spend the moonlight nights of summer, amid enchanted walls and glittering palaces.

The party at length arrived at the most distant part

of the park, where a gothic lodge and gateway, at the end of a noble avenue, afforded a pleasing variety to the prospect. One of the doors of the lodge opened into the park, and the other into the public road.

Mrs. Green was busy among her little children; presenting with her spectacled nose, her toothless mouth, and little mob-cap, an object of no small merriment to the tittering Dorothea. The old lady was however very proud of her visitors, bringing forward her best scholars and most gaudy samplers for their examination. The books the old lady used, were the Horn-Book and the Bible, with Watts's Hymns and Catechisms; and it appeared that many of her little pupils could read with considerable readiness.

"And all this for four-pence a week!" said Miss Dorothea, laughing. "All this, Mrs. Green, for four-pence a week!"

"Yes, Madam," said Mrs. Green: "except when I teach marking. I then add two-pence more."

"What!" said Miss Dorothea, "don't you charge more than two-pence a week for teaching the children to make parrots with cherries in their mouths, and Adam and Eve, and the serpent? why you give more for the money than any body I ever met with!"

The old woman smiled and courtesied, not seeing through the polite sarcasm of her elegant visitors.

"And, pray, what do you charge for teaching manners?" said Miss Hartley; "I remember hearing of a school in Worcestershire, where two-pence a week was charged for instructions in that branch of polite knowledge."

"Madam," said the old lady, who now began to see that her visitors were laughing at her, "though I am a poor woman, yet I try to make my children behave properly, because I consider good-manners as the best ornament of every rank."

Miss Hartley blushed, for she felt herself reproved, although the old woman had meant no reproof: so calling her young people to her, she hastily walked away.

The same evening Margarita obtained permission from Lady Harriet to put Rachel Careless to school. The favour was asked by Margarita with some fear and trembling: but it was immediately granted by Lady Harriet,

who bestowed as little consideration on the subject as if the child had asked her for a new doll: for being deeply engaged at the moment the request was made with a new novel, she answered, "Do what you like, only don't trouble me; and, I beseech you, keep off the sofa, for, really, I believe that you have found out the secret of perpetual motion."

There was in the family of Lady Harriet, an old house-keeper of the name of Hill, a woman of considerable merit and respectability; and, lest I should make my story too long, I shall tell you, in few words, that little Margarita, having obtained leave to do what she chose in this affair, applied for assistance to Mrs. Hill, from whom she effectually obtained all she wished. She carried her purse to this worthy person, informed her of the plan that had occupied her thoughts, and, putting the money into her hand, asked her advice how it might be best employed for the little girl's benefit. Mrs. Hill counted the money. It amounted to eleven shillings.

"When do you expect to get any more money, Miss Margarita?"

"O, I don't know," said the little girl; "sometimes I have a great deal, and sometimes I have none: but I think I shall have a guinea at Christmas."

"Well, then," said Mrs. Hill, "I will tell you what we will do. We will reckon that this money is to last you one quarter of a year. We will put by four shillings and four-pence for the quarter's schooling, and we will take the rest of the money to buy the little girl a decent dress."

"O," said Margarita, "I dare say my aunt will give me leave to give her some of my old clothes."

"My dear," said the housekeeper, "your old clothes are always given to your maid; you therefore cannot take them from her in justice, because when she was hired they were promised to her. But, if this were not the case, your clothes are not fit for a poor child; every one ought to be clothed according to their station. What you wish to give her must therefore be bought for her: and as you will have six shillings and eight-pence left, I will engage to procure for you, with that money, every thing the child may want to make one suit, excepting a pair of shoes; and we must wait a

little for these, unless I can buy, from your brother's servant, an old pair of Master Gerard's, and have them mended up for her."

"I have just recollect'd," said Margarita, at this moment flushing high with joy, "that I have got a new half-crown in my drawing-box; I will fetch it in a moment; will that do?"

"Yes, yes," said Mrs. Hill, "that will be a great help; now we shall do."

"And will you procure materials for the clothes, dear Mrs. Hill?" said the little girl, "and shall I make them?"

"I will purchase them, and cut them out," said the good housekeeper, "and get them made for you this time, because you want them in haste; but after that, when others may be occasionally wanted, it will be pleasant employment for you to make your little girl's clothes yourself: for every young lady should know how to work and cut out for the poor. You will find this to be very agreeable work; and it is delightful to see ladies of quality thus employed."

"But cannot I help to do something now?" said Margarita.

"O yes," said Mrs. Hill, "you may make your little girl a work-bag, and a housewife, and a pincushion; and you must get her a spelling-book, and a Bible, and a pair of scissars, and a thimble."

Margarita was all joy to find her scheme going on so prosperously. She delivered all her money to Mrs. Hill, begging her to manage it for her; and running up stairs, she soon found an old Bible and spelling-book in the repository of rubbish before mentioned, or, to speak more properly, in the repository of wasted and torn articles. And having obtained leave to take them, she delivered them to Mrs. Hill to paste and mend up as well as she could. After which, the dear child was benevolently led to search the cupboard again; and finding certain bits of satin and of printed calico, the former of which had been put by among her treasures for a doll's hat, and the latter for a patch-work bedquilt for the same lady; she set joyfully to work for the purpose of preparing the articles judged necessary for the little girl to take to school. Mrs. Hill had accomplished all she had undertaken before Marga-

rita was quite ready with her part; for not being accustomed to employ herself in a useful or industrious way, she was very long in effecting that which a more active person would have completed in a few hours. However, at the end of the week, little Rachel was dressed and sent to school.

I am certain that my reader will not be surprised to hear that, when the first quarter was out, Margarita's purse was sufficiently replenished, either by the usual presents she received from her aunt, or from chance remittances from one or other of her friends, to enable her to carry on her charitable design with respect to little Rachel. And in a short time she began to receive in her own person the reward of this laudable action, to which she had no doubt been divinely led: for, from the habit of considering how she was to supply the wants of Rachel Careless, she acquired the habit of general carefulness. Whatever might be given to her in common with the other young people for the use of her doll, she instantly examined with a view to little Rachel. If it was a bit of muslin, she would say to herself, "This will make Rachel a cap; I will get Mrs. Hill to cut it out, and I will make it;" if it was a riband, "O! this will do to fasten Rachel's scissars to her side;" or if it was a bit of silk, "Rachel wants a new pincushion." And as her means of doing good increased, she was led to enlarge her objects of charity; so that after a while she made a complete set of pincushions, housewives, and work-bags, for all the children in Mrs. Green's school; and Mrs. Hill was so kind as to walk with her to deliver them.

In the mean time, that careful spirit which she had first exercised towards the poor, now extended itself to her own little possessions and clothes; and this so insensibly that she was not herself readily aware of it. Her frocks were no longer torn whenever they were put on: her shoes, bonnets, and gloves, looked fresh and new, when those belonging to her cousins were completely spoiled. The colours, brushes, and pencils, in her paint-box, were neither wasted nor mislaid; and as for toys and trinkets, she had lost all desire for them. Insomuch that when taken with her cousins to a toy-shop, on accompanying Lady Harriet in her coach to the neighbouring town, if allowed to spend money, she would invariably spend it in such a

way as would most profit the poor: for even in a toy-shop some useful things may be found, such as knives, scissars, &c.

Thus passed away several years: and in the mean time Lady Harriet either would not or did not observe these peculiarities in Margarita's character; while her cousins and Miss Hartley, though they sometimes laughed at her, for the most part left her to herself so long as she did not interfere with them.

At the end of this time, Lady Harriet took a house in town for a few months every year, with the express purpose of introducing her daughters at court and into society. Jane was introduced the first year, and was said to be an elegant young woman, though not thought so handsome as her mother had been. Celia's turn came the next year, but this young lady did not obtain so many suffrages from the public even as her sister Jane, being a young person of a very ordinary and uninteresting character. While in town, the younger children were kept much in the back-ground: but Miss Hartley being then considered more as a companion to them than a governess, they had much liberty allowed them in private. Lady Harriet still however continued to charge herself with the superintendance of their dress, and to order what she chose them to wear: for she maintained, that very young women seldom, if left to themselves, know how to dress themselves fit to be seen. However, she directed her steward to allow them a certain sum every quarter for their pocket-money, shoes, and gloves, with other trifles. The sum she fixed upon for this purpose was five guineas a quarter; which, considering their situation in life, was not extravagant. Lady Susan happened to be visiting in their house in town when the first quarterly payment was made: and on this occasion, she took an opportunity of speaking to the young people on the duty of spending their money to good purpose.

In the opening of her discourse she referred them to the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew.—*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand,*

*but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*

These verses, which I have given you at length, though a somewhat long quotation, in order to spare you the trouble of looking for them in your Bible, have a literal as well as a figurative sense. But Lady Susan, without referring to the spiritual sense, took occasion from them to notice the obligation lying upon all men to do good to the poor. She also observed, that now it was in their power to do good, as she hoped it had always been their wish; whence she proceeded to point out, that in order to do good with this money now placed in their hands, two things were necessary: first, personal economy, or the practice of self-denial; and secondly, that prudence which would enable them to put what they give to the poor to the best advantage; “because,” said she, “a single sixpence, properly bestowed, may be rendered more useful than twenty

pounds indiscriminately lavished on idle and improper characters. There is no rank in life," continued Lady Susan, "in which economy, or the proper use of money, is not a valuable science. And the higher a person's situation in life may be, the more important is this knowledge: inasmuch as a poor person by want of economy can only injure himself and his family; while a person in higher life may injure many families by the absence of economy."

On hearing this discourse, some of the young ladies shrugged up their shoulders; and Jane said, "Indeed, my dear aunt, if we are to do much good with the money now in our hands, we must study a very close economy indeed: for, to tell you the truth, I do not expect, out of these five guineas now in my hand, to have a single guinea left at the end of a week."

"That I am sure you will not, Jane," said Celia. "No, nor if you were to have twice the sum."

"Please to understand, young ladies," said Lady Susan, "that where persons are resolved in the expenditure of their money to consult their wishes and not their real wants, no sum of money, however large, can ever prove sufficient for them. But in order to become a strict and proper economist, the individual should first form an accurate idea of what is really necessary for him, taking into consideration his rank and situation in society; and having ascertained this point, he ought to make it a matter of conscience not to exceed it."

"My dear aunt," said Dorothea, "I must tell you that you lose your labour in speaking upon these subjects to my sisters Jane and Celia; they hate economy, and I am sure will never practise it if they can help it: but my cousin Margarita will listen to you from morning till night, if you will take the trouble of talking to her on this subject. I verily believe that she has the whole *Economy of Charity* by heart; and when she is in the country she spends the greater part of her time in making patchwork and night-caps for the poor."

"Is this true, Margarita?" said Lady Susan, turning to her niece with an expression of pleasure. "Is this true of you? and have I known you so long, and never heard this before? If this be so, my dear child, I sincerely rejoice!" And so saying, she took her by the hand and

led her into her own room, where they had a long conversation: during which, Lady Susan gave her many excellent lessons on the proper expenditure of money; and also upon the subject of dress, the love of which the old lady pointed out as the particular temptation of females. Thence proceeding to lay down her sentiments upon this subject more at large—“ My dear Margarita,” said Lady Susan, “ from the view of your character which your cousins have just given me, I am led to hope that I am now addressing a pious young person: I shall therefore endeavour to set before you such rules with regard to this point as I have been enabled to draw from Scripture; and I shall hope, by drawing your attention to a few solid principles on the subject of dress, to confirm you in your wish to do good, and enable you at the same time to detect the false taste by which worldly women are continually influenced in this matter.

“ We learn from Scripture,” proceeded Lady Susan, “ that until man committed sin it was not necessary for him to wear any clothing; but when our first parents had sinned, *the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked: and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.* (Gen. iii. 7.) From this passage,” continued the old lady, “ we learn that sin requires a covering. The sinful body must be clothed with natural garments, in order to give it a decent appearance in this world; but the polluted soul must be clad in the robes of the Saviour’s righteousness, before it can be admitted into glory. Hence the man who appeared at the marriage-supper without a wedding-garment, was cast out as wanting that which conceals all spiritual deformity. Clothing, therefore, in conformity to the intention of the Almighty, should be an ample covering, concealing, as far as possible, all the imperfections of our vile bodies: and wherever this rule is not attended to, we depart from the ordinance of God, for unto Adam and his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins. Next to rendering dress an ample covering, I would,” said the Lady Susan, “ rank cleanliness as an essential article: although in our line of life it is less needful to dwell upon this point, yet I cannot forbear to observe that cleanliness is emblematic of that inward purity and spiritual beauty which they possess who are clothed in the gar-

ments of salvation. Suitableness to station and convenience should also be attended to in dress ; since it must be allowed, that whatever dress is obviously unsuitable to the circumstances of the wearer, or evidently inconvenient, cannot be otherwise than in a bad taste, however beautiful in other respects.

“ And now we will proceed,” said Lady Susan, “ to that important question on which so many mistakes are made : I mean elegance of dress. True elegance of dress, my dear Margarita, is much more consistent with economy than many of our fine ladies imagine ; and I could earnestly wish that some accomplished writer would address the female public on this subject, and would endeavour to convince them of this truth—that true elegance cannot exist without simplicity. When any one figure in a large circle forces itself upon the eye by glaring colours, or any peculiar form of dress, that figure may generally be found to be inelegant. The most perfect models of female beauty are not those which most suddenly take the eye, but those which will bear the most close inspection. From this it appears, that simple colouring and a simple form should always be selected in dress ; that the drapery adopted ought not to be of a broken and fantastic character, but should form a flowing line with as few interruptions as possible, in order to constitute an elegant figure. In this view all those superfluous ornaments which are either attached to a dress or wrought into its texture, do but deduct so much from its real elegance : and hence, those various and complicated decorations which women so eagerly covet, are but so many blots and blemishes in the simple majesty of a beautiful female ; while they tend only to render the defects of an ordinary person still more conspicuous. Allowing this to be true, we find, my dear Margarita,” added the old lady, “ that economy and self-denial are perfectly consistent with elegance ; even supposing that we should have no higher motives of action than the desire of appearing agreeable. But granting that it were not so, a young woman who professes piety must at all events withdraw and separate herself from the daughters of fashion—for the apostle says, *I will, in like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shame-facedness, and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold,*

*or pearls, or costly array ; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."* (1 Timothy ii. 9, 10.)

It was not to an inattentive hearer that Lady Susan uttered this commendatory discourse in favour of humility and simplicity in dress, together with the duty of fore-going all unnecessary articles of expence. The young lady not only listened respectfully to every word, but considered every point with the deepest attention: and as Lady Susan was to accompany the family this year into the country, Margarita hoped to have many conversations with her during the summer months upon the same subject. In the mean time she economized her little property as well as she could, and found with pleasure that the sum allowed her was considerably greater than what she really required.

The family were to remain in town till after the birth-day. But some weeks before that time, Margarita heard her cousins say that they had not one farthing left of their quarter's allowance; and this was accompanied by an hint from Dorothea, that the next time she had any call for money she should not fail to borrow from Margarita's hoard. This hint so much alarmed Margarita, that she took the precaution the next time she saw Lady Susan, to put three guineas into her hand, requesting her to keep it for her till their return into the country: "and then," she said, "you shall direct me how to spend it."

Lady Susan smiled, and put the money into her purse.

A few days after this, as Miss Hartley and her pupils were walking through Piccadilly, Dorothea saw a very beautiful work-box in a window, and begged Miss Hartley to allow her to go into the shop. On further inspection she admired the box more than at first; and not desiring to resist the temptation, she ordered it home.

As Lady Harriet Mowbray was known to the shop-keeper, no difficulty was made: so in the afternoon, while the governess and the younger ladies were at tea, (for they lived quite apart from Lady Harriet when in town,) the box was brought home with the bill. The box was delivered to Miss Dorothea; but Miss Hartley taking the bill, ordered that the man should wait for the money.

"The money!" said Dorothea. "O! he must go;

for I have got no money ! He must wait till I receive my next payment."

" You know, Miss Dorothea," said Miss Hartley, " that it was your mamma's particular request that you should incur no debts. I dare not send away the person without payment."

" Then you must lend me the money, Hartley—dear little Hartley," said Dorothea, half laughing.

" Indeed I cannot," said Miss Hartley ; " for I am myself as poor as a church mouse."

" I shall ask Celia, then," said Dorothea, " to lend me a guinea."

" It will be to no purpose," said Miss Hartley ; " for Miss Celia has been without money for the last fortnight."

" Then Margarita must open her hoard," said Dorothea, laughing. " I knew it would come to this. Come, Margarita, open your coffers ; give me a guinea. It must be ; don't redden so violently ; I must have it."

" I cannot, cousin," returned Margarita. " I have only some silver left, and I have a pair of shoes to pay for."

Great amazement was now expressed by every person present ; for although they had calculated so ill their own expences, they could reckon very accurately the money which Margarita had expended ; and they were pretty well assured that she ought to have near four guineas in hand.

" Come, come, Miss Margarita," said Miss Hartley, " you have abundance of money left ; don't be mean and ungrateful, but help your cousins."

" I hope I am neither mean nor ungrateful," returned Margarita, firmly : " and I would help my cousins, I hope, to the last shilling, if they were in distress. But I assure you, that I now have only a few shillings ; and as I would not appear to conceal any thing from my friends, I will plainly tell you, that I have put three guineas in my aunt Lady Susan's hands, to be spent in a charitable work when we return into the country."

Miss Hartley shook her head, and looked as if she suspected some double dealings ; while Dorothea, though the most aggrieved person, laughed out, and said, " So much for *The Economy of Charity*. Well done, Margarita ! well done, little cousin ! you well know how to take care of yourself, I see."

Dorothea then ran to borrow the guinea in question of

her mamma's maid ; and so, after Miss Hartley had vented her indignation, by holding forth for some time in praise of generosity, and in condemnation of stinginess, the matter was dropped.

From this period to the birth-day the daughters of Lady Harriet were destitute of a single sixpence : but as their wants were all imaginary, they endured their indigence without loss of ease or health ; though, when they saw any thing they wished to possess, they never failed to attack Margarita, sometimes half in play, and sometimes almost in anger.—“Come, Margarita, open your purse, and treat me with that riband,” one would say.—“Margarita, I must have such a trinket: lend me five shillings ; do, there is a good girl,” said another.—“We are very, very poor,” said a third, “we come under the denomination of paupers ; you could not bestow your money better than by giving it to us ; and as we are near relations, we have the first claim : do consult *The Economy of Charity* : you will find our cases described and recommended for relief there, we are very sure.”

On the king's birth-day, a great uncle of the young people coming to town, these paupers were all opportunely relieved by the present of a guinea to each—a supply which Margarita failed not to add to her stock, and not without some amazement at the unexpected accumulation of her little fund.

After the birth-day the family returned into the country, accompanied by Lady Susan ; and as Margarita was at this time in her seventeenth year, she understood that she was to be emancipated from strict attendance in the school-room, and permitted to amuse herself more in her own way. This was a great relief, and especially as it allowed her to devote much of her time to Lady Susan.

This excellent lady, who possessed clear views of religion, a highly cultivated mind, elegant manners, and a very large portion of the rare quality of self-denial, had great pleasure in the society of Margarita, whose steadiness of character and active benevolence afforded a strong ground of hope that they would form the basis of a very noble character. Lady Susan now made it her object to point out to Margarita those religious principles which are the only true sources of charity in all its forms. She taught her, that certain minds are so constituted by na-

ture, as to derive little pleasure from the vanities of the world, and to find much more delight in bestowing benefits than in receiving them—"And, indeed," said she, "it must be confessed, that there is something very sooth-ing and gratifying in the thought of being followed by the grateful acknowledgments of the poor: but, inasmuch as this feeling may be nothing more than a higher kind of selfishness, and is liable to disappear when the passions are strongly excited in some other way, it is necessary that we should seek a purer principle of action than even the gratification of these amiable feelings."

The good old lady then proceeded to inform Margarita, that charity or benevolence was never consistent, or to be depended upon, unless it sprung from the love of God and the love of man as the creature of God. And she further took occasion from this, to open to the young lady that glorious system of divine love which is displayed throughout the plan of man's salvation—dwelling particularly and largely upon the doctrine of the Trinity-in-Unity; and especially as that doctrine furnishes a striking display of the love of God the Father; of justification by Christ; as well as of regeneration and sanctification by the Holy Spirit. And, under the divine blessing, she succeeded in making these sacred truths plain and acceptable to the mind of her young relation; teaching her at the same time, that a knowledge of man's depravity in general, and of her own particular sinfulness, together with what God has graciously done for the human race, ought to inspire her with such feelings of Christian charity as should enable her to retain a strong desire to serve her fellow-creatures through every trial of ingratitude and contempt, and even in cases where benefits are returned by injuries. In addition to which she maintained, that alms-giving was only a part, and a small part, of Christian charity; concluding her discourse with St. Paul's definition of this inestimable grace.—*Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.* (1 Cor. xiii. 4—7.)

It was not long after this conversation, that a circum-

stance happened, which furnished an opening for the proper employment of some of the money laid up by Margarita. An old servant of the family, married some years past to a man who had used her very ill, arrived in the neighbourhood of Mowbray-hall, in a state of the utmost indigence. Lady Harriet immediately supplied all her necessities: but being worn with disease and affliction she soon died, leaving a son, about seventeen years of age, in a most friendless and destitute state. This youth, thus bereaved of his only parent, was in every respect a peculiar object of pity, having a fine aspect, considerable talents, and manners above his station. He had been the best of sons to a very tender mother, who had taught him every thing in her power; and as she had occupied the place of an upper servant in a great family, she had been enabled to advance his education beyond what is usually expected among persons in ordinary life.

Lady Susan failed not to point out to Margarita that a little money seasonably spent on this young man might secure his well-doing, humanly speaking, through life. "If you could afford to put him for a short time into a situation where he might be improved in the knowledge of business, and enjoy religious instruction, he might afterwards make a respectable tradesman, or a valuable servant: whereas, if now neglected, he will probably sink into the lowest and most vicious habits. But, Margarita," said she, "in order to effect this plan, extreme self-denial will be requisite on your part: your gloves and shoes, which are all you have to provide for yourself, must be worn with care; and no trinkets or ornaments can be had. Let me however advise you," added the old lady, "that, in order to economize, you do not buy any ill-made articles; what *must* be had should be good of the kind, though plain: and I doubt not but that you will derive a sufficient motive for care, from the recollection that the well-doing of a poor boy depends upon it." Lady Susan gave it as her further advice to Margarita, that she should empower Mrs. Hill to make every suitable arrangement for Edmund, and that she should receive all her commands respecting him: "for, my dear niece," she added, "it is always advisable that young ladies should exercise the utmost delicacy in their charities, and that in cases where they wish to serve the other sex, they should

employ some third person whom they can trust to act for them."

"If you please then, aunt," returned Margarita, "Edmund shall not be told who it is that assists him; or will you allow me to use your name on the occasion?"

"I will settle this matter with Mrs. Hill," said Lady Susan: "and remember, my dear niece, that you know where to apply, if at any time you find your resources deficient."

Every thing respecting Edmund was now speedily arranged; and a Mr. Markham undertook to receive him for ten guineas a year, provided he was allowed to assist in certain little matters in the family; so that within a fortnight of his mother's death, he set off to his master, about twelve miles distant, in a plain coarse habit, carrying with him a complete suit of mourning, with a proper stock of linen, books, and other matters, which were a present from Lady Susan. It was also appointed that Edmund should spend the Christmas with Martha Lawley, who agreed to receive him for three shillings a week. This being arranged, and Margarita full of joy on the subject, (for young people are always most happy when they have some laudable object in view,) the young lady became particularly anxious for her aunt's company, she being the only person with whom she could venture to converse on her favourite topics.

In consequence of the affection thus growing between the aunt and niece, they had many pleasing walks together through the beautiful environs of Mowbray-hall: and not unfrequently they strolled forth after breakfast with their work and a book, that while the old lady employed herself with her needle Margarita might read to her. In this way they went through a course of ancient history, the old lady commenting as they went along, and drawing forth many Christian morals from stories of ancient heathen philosophers and kings. The Bible also made a frequent part of their studies: to which Milton and Cowper were occasionally added, besides several other of the most beautiful works of imagination which our language can supply.

A favourite retreat of Lady Susan and Margarita on these occasions, was a root-house in the most distant part of the shrubbery, on the borders of the lake before men-

tioned ; at the back of which a little winding walk passing through a grove of Scotch firs led to a stile which opened into a valley at the foot of the woody knoll, which was seen from the windows of the drawing-room. This valley was filled with orchards, and scattered here and there with thatched cottages, the nearest of which standing in a garden, gay with pinks and carnations, gilliflowers and woodbine, was the dwelling of old Martha Lawley, into which Lady Susan and her niece not unfrequently retreated in the heat of the day. Neither were these visits made occasions of idleness ; for Lady Susan availed herself of them to give Rachel many sweet and profitable instructions : and being well versed in the art of teaching, it was wonderful, through the divine blessing, how greatly she improved this young creature by her short communications, in respect both to religious knowledge and general manners. Rachel was a pretty girl, slender and delicate in her person, and modest in her behaviour ; in somuch that she soon became remarkable among her young companions, few if any of her village associates being in any way comparable to her. Thus sweetly passed away the remains of the summer ; and in the autumn Lady Susan returned home, leaving Margarita much more fully acquainted than she had before been with the sources from which strength must be derived for the regular fulfilment of the delightful duties in which she was then engaged. For Lady Susan had very carefully impressed this truth on the mind of her young disciple, that strength to do well is not to be found in man, but is the gift of God, and must daily be sought, received, and applied as the manna in the wilderness, which corrupted and bred worms when laid by as a dependence for the next day.

At Christmas Edmund came for a few weeks to Martha Lawley. Margarita saw him several times at a distance, and was rejoiced to hear Mrs. Hill's account of his improvements. She also met him one day as he was coming through the shrubbery from the cottage to the hall, on a Sunday, when he was dressed in his black suit and made a very respectable appearance. He bowed low to the young ladies as they passed, and Dorothea said, "Really, Edmund Barclay looks very well ; I wish I could find out who supports him where he is."

"Find out who supports him where he is," said Miss Jane: "don't you know that this is one of the good works of my good aunt Susan?"

"I don't believe it," returned Dorothea, laughing: "I never did believe it."

"Well, then, who does?" says Jane.

"Somebody," replied Dorothea, laughing: "and I think I have also a correct idea of this same somebody."

"What do you mean? and whom do you mean?" said Jane.

"*The Economy of Charity*," returned Dorothea, giving her cousin, whose arm she held, a slight pinch, of which however Margarita took no notice.

A few days after this, as the same party, accompanied by Miss Hartley, were walking through a long field, they were surprised by a cow, which looked fiercely at them, tossing her head and evidencing such symptoms as might have intimidated a more courageous spirit than that of Miss Hartley, who being in the constant habit of giving way to every emotion of fear on the slightest occasion, was entirely deprived of all self-command where real danger appeared. Accordingly, she began to utter most vehement shrieks, while she stood looking this way and that way without stirring, although she was further from the animal than any one of the party. All creatures are encouraged by finding themselves enabled to intimidate those whom they wish to attack. The cow came forwards, and advanced fast upon the young ladies: in the mean time, Miss Hartley turning suddenly round fell to the earth, and rolling into a deep furrow the animal passed her without observing her; still following the young ladies, who in their fright ran in a direction where neither stile nor gate offered them the means of escape. While in this really disagreeable situation, a youth made his appearance, endeavouring to get over the fence, which he speedily effected; and, having torn a stake from the hedge with a violent effort, he flew towards the cow, whom he assailed so furiously on the hinder parts, as obliged her instantly to turn round to revenge herself on her new enemy. The youth then ran from the cow, calling to the ladies to make their escape; and probably he might have paid dearly for his intrepidity, if the owner of the animal, a stout farmer, had not entered the

field at the moment, and used such means as he well knew how to employ for regulating the motions of this troublesome animal.

In the mean time, the young ladies having made their way to a stile in the corner of the field, and being there joined by Miss Hartley, they entered upon a second field, where, in their present state of apprehension, they were not a little distressed to see another phalanx of the same horned quadrupeds by which they had been before so much terrified. "What shall we do?" said Miss Hartley. "What with my fall (for none of you stopped to assist me when I fell into the furrow) and my terror, I am scarcely able to move at all; my heart beats frightfully, and if any one of those animals you see yonder were but to look at me, I am certain I should faint."

"And if you were to faint, Miss Hartley," said Jane, "on any occasion of alarm, you see that there is not one of us you could depend upon to stand by you."

"But who was that dear kind young man who dropped so opportunely from the clouds to help us?" said Dorothea: "he behaved like a hero. We must not allow our gallant knight-errant to go without a reward."

"Why did you not recognize him?" said Celia: "did not you know Edmund Barclay?"

"O! *The Economy of Charity*," said Dorothea, laughing, and looking at Margarita; "I wonder at my stupidity, but Edmund must have a reward, he behaved nobly."

"Here he comes again," said Celia, and at the same moment the youth appeared, his face all flushed with exercise, and his eyes sparkling with delight to think of the exploit which he had just performed.

"Ladies," said he, "Farmer Worthing has sent me to attend you across this next piece, and to drive off the cattle." So saying, he bowed to Margarita, to whom he had especially addressed his speech, and immediately placed himself in a line with her, though at a very respectful distance.

The young ladies now took occasion to thank him very cordially for what he had done; to which he made no reply but by a very humble bow, still keeping himself in a line with Margarita, whose eye he watched as they approached the cattle.

“ Edmund Barclay,” said Dorothea, whispering to Miss Hartley, “ can see no one but Margarita in this company : if all these cows were so many giants, he would not care if we were all run away with, provided he could save her.” Then addressing herself in a loud whisper to her cousin, she said, “ I am sorry, Margarita, to see that Edmund Barclay has so little discernment.”

“ What do you mean ? ” said Margarita, colouring.

“ O ! nothing,” returned Dorothea, laughing : “ but I think he mistakes you for Lady Susan.”

“ He cannot mistake me for a more worthy person,” returned Margarita.

“ Yes, but surely you would not wish at your time of life to look like a woman of fifty ! ” said Dorothea.

“ What is all this nonsense, Miss Dorothea ? ” said Miss Hartley.

“ Margarita understands me,” replied Dorothea : “ look how she blushes ! ” All eyes were now fixed upon Margarita ; who, in order to turn them from her, had nothing to do but to declare that one of the cows was looking very attentively upon the party, and that it might perhaps be better for them to pass on in silence.

“ Don’t be frightened, Miss,” said Edmund, on hearing this ; and with that he brandished his stick.

“ I am not afraid, Edmund,” returned Margarita ; “ particularly now you are here to take care of us.”

Thus ended an adventure, which convinced Margarita that Edmund was by some means or other acquainted with the real name of his benefactress ; of which she was soon afterwards further assured by the present of a curious basket made of osiers, which the grateful youth sent her a few days afterwards with his humble duty.

When Lady Harriet heard of Edmund’s prowess, she very properly presented him with two guineas, which were made five by the young ladies : which sum the generous young man brought to Mrs. Hill, requesting that it might be laid out in such a way as to spare the purse of the friend who paid for his instruction. At the usual season this year, Lady Harriet went again with her family to town, where she introduced Dorothea at court ; at which period she and Margarita were entirely emancipated from the dominion of Miss Hartley, and certain additions made to their pocket-money.

During their residence in town this season, Mr. Dashwood, a gentleman of fortune and family, saw and was pleased with Jane: and Lady Harriet managed matters so well, that in the course of a few weeks he was brought to declare his regard for her; after which the marriage took place as soon as the writings could be drawn up. During this period she carried her three elder daughters much into public; but Margarita not having been introduced at court was permitted to remain in private.

Immediately after the birth-day, the family returned into the country, but their party was considerably diminished; for Celia accompanied her sister to Mr. Dashwood's house in Essex, Miss Hartley found herself another situation, and Fanny was placed in a fashionable establishment in Queen's Square. In consequence of the absence of Celia and the marriage of Jane, Dorothea and Margarita were now brought more forward in the family than formerly; upon which Dorothea, who had always been her mother's secret favourite, as promising to be the handsomest of the family, became more sensible of her own influence; which circumstance, together with the scenes of vanity to which she had been lately introduced, operated powerfully in bringing to light her natural character, which was haughty, careless, and vain. At this period, Lady Harriet thought it right that each of the young people should be indulged with a female servant: and accordingly a young woman, who had been a dress-maker, was brought down from town for Dorothea; while Margarita humbly requested that she might be allowed to take Rachel, who was now nearly seventeen years of age.

"What for?" said Lady Harriet, when she heard this request.

"To wait on me, Madam," said Margarita.

"And in order that she may finish her education," added Miss Dorothea, laughing; "in imitation, no doubt, of some precedent laid forth in her favourite book."

"I do beseech you, my dear girl," said Lady Harriet, "I do earnestly entreat that we may hear no more of that book: I have been bored to death with it these last six years; for heaven's sake let us hear something less stale. Do what you please, Margarita; take what ser-

want you wish ; but do not turn my house into an alms-house, I supplicate."

Margarita was quite satisfied with the liberty so ungraciously given her, and accordingly hastened, soon after their arrival at Mowbray-hall, to engage the services of her young protégée, who received the proposal and entered upon the office assigned her with delight, although so totally unfit for the place, that her young lady, in fact, rather found an addition than a diminution of labour in the acquisition. Margarita, however, at this time had no particular object which needed her attention. Rachel was neat, orderly, docile, and pious ; she could do plain needle-work extremely well, and could read fluently : she was, in short, precisely in that state which prepared her for receiving any further improvement to which her young mistress might be disposed to call her attention. Now Margarita had no greater pleasure at present, than that of instructing her ; for which purpose she kept her almost constantly in her own room. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, if Rachel's improvements were rapid, and that she promised speedily to become an accomplished waiting-maid, possessing the advantage of more principle and intelligence than commonly falls to the lot of persons of this description.

About this time, Edmund left his situation, and came to old Martha Lawley's, Lady Harriet's gardener having engaged to supply him with employment till his friends could provide him with a more suitable situation. He was now become a remarkably fine youth ; and though Mrs. Hill assured Miss Margarita that she had never told him the name of his benefactress, yet it was very plain that he knew it perfectly well, as he daily made a selection of the most beautiful flowers which he could procure, and sent them by the hand of Rachel to Margarita.

About this period, Margarita was inexpressibly affected by a report of the sudden death of Lady Susan : neither was she consoled for the loss of her dearest and best earthly friend, by the superadded information that Lady Susan had left her all in her power to bequeath, namely, a little estate which had long been in the family, on the borders of Wales ; and which had been retained chiefly on account of the extraordinary beauty of its situation. As this estate brought in only about thirty pounds a year,

it was spoken of as a thing of no importance by Lady Harriet; who, when referring to the subject, used to say, "Margarita is very welcome to this little property; I am sure I do not covet it; though I wonder that my aunt should have entirely overlooked her other nephews and nieces in her will: but the poor thing had very little to leave."

I must here remark, that, according to the will, the young lady was to come into immediate possession of the estate. But we now proceed to a circumstance of greater importance in the opinion of Lady Harriet, than the death of an old aunt, of whom much could not be expected—this was the arrival from Ireland, by invitation, of Lady Anna Maria Claverton, the widowed sister of Lady Harriet, with her only son Henry Augustus Claverton, a young man possessed of some thousands a year.

Lady Harriet had long considered this young man as a very proper husband for her favourite daughter Dorothea; and it was for the purpose of forwarding this project, that she had with much importunity engaged her sister to visit Mowbray-hall. Whether she gave a hint of her design to Dorothea, or whether the young lady had formed her own projects independently of her mother, does not appear; but certain it is, that they both had the same views respecting the young heir, and were both prepared to further them by every means in their power.

Both the mother and the daughter were in consequence not a little pleased when they received notice that Lady Anna Maria was actually on the road, accompanied by her son and a Captain Freeman, a kind of hanger-on upon certain great families, and one who contrived to dine in style, and drink his bottle of Madeira at other men's expence during three-thirds of the year, at the same time making them believe that he conferred a favour upon them in so doing.

It cannot be supposed but that Captain Freeman had certain talents by which he was enabled to render himself peculiarly acceptable in the various families among which he was in the habit of dividing his time: and, in fact, such and so various were his accomplishments, that I must despair of comprising them in a very small enumeration. In the first place, though not handsome, he dressed well, had fine teeth, and an expressive countenance. He danced

remarkably well, and could speedily put a whole company right, when out in the figure of a cotillon or country-dance. He could play at backgammon, hazard, or any other game of cards or dice. He was an expert billiard-player, he rode well, was an excellent sportsman, and entered a room with perfect grace. No one understood better than himself the difficult art of paying a graceful and delicate compliment; and he could solve a puzzle or conundrum, though darker than those put by the Queen of Sheba to Solomon. It would have been easier to bring down the stars from their spheres, than to have made him blush: and to sum up his character in a few words, he never lost sight of his own interest, while he never appeared to be occupied by it for a single moment. Such was Captain Freeman; and you may suppose that he was no unacceptable addition to the society at Mowbray-hall, though but a secondary object to the young heir, whose character as well as that of his mother I shall allow to speak for itself; simply hinting that the old lady had neither improved her manners by a long residence among her inferiors, nor added any thing to the agreeableness of her person by an auburn wig, with a tinge of vermillion on her sallow cheek: but the young man was remarkably well looking.

The party I have described, arrived at Mowbray-hall to a late dinner, and were received very cordially by the lady of the mansion and her elegant daughter. But as they all retired to change their dresses immediately after the first salutations, Dorothea had no time to study the character of Mr. Claverton till they met again in the drawing-room: at which time Margarita was absent, having employed the long morning in some of her usual exercises, which she found herself unable to complete so soon as she had expected. Dorothea had persuaded herself that the young heir would be extremely forward to establish himself in her good graces: she was therefore surprised on entering the drawing-room, to see him sitting in the bow-window, contemplating the scene which thence presented itself to his view with an air of the deepest thought.

It is the greatest offence which a gentleman can commit in the opinion of some young ladies, to be occupied, in their presence, on any other subject than their personal charms. This however was an offence of which Mr. Claverton was

verton was guilty towards Dorothea ; and, what was worse than all, he persevered in his want of politeness for several minutes after she had entered the room.

"He is very good looking," thought Dorothea ; "but I am sure he is stupid."

"What are you contemplating there, Augustus?" said Lady Harriet, speaking as if she had actually read her daughter's thoughts.

The young man slightly started on hearing his aunt's voice, and answered, that he was drawing a comparison between the rich and highly ornamented scene before him and the rude environs of Claverton-castle.

"I hope that your own fine place is not suffering from the comparison, Augustus," said Lady Harriet : "I have heard that it is beautifully situated."

Augustus made some slight answer, and sunk again into a thoughtful mood, remaining silent for some time. And as Lady Harriet's attention was called to her sister, who talked without ceasing, his lucubrations were not again immediately disturbed.

In the mean time, the gallant captain was using every exertion to make himself agreeable ; and having found means to draw up close to Dorothea, was just then affecting raptures at a drawing which hung over the chimney-piece, and which he very shrewdly suspected to be the work of the young lady herself. Dorothea let the compliment pass without any explanation, and allowed the captain to enter into further conversation with her ; which conversation however was by no means so interesting as to draw her attention from her cousin and his concerns.

At length, Augustus turning from the window, directed his eyes upon his aunt, whom having contemplated a while without change of countenance, he fixed his regard on Dorothea, though in a manner sufficiently respectful : the young lady however, not doubting but that she should gain by being thus contemplated, allowed him full opportunity of continuing his investigation, by turning to the captain, and seeming very attentive to his discourse.

Here I must pause, to remark upon the privileged state of those happy persons, whose minds being withdrawn from self to higher objects, and who having been enabled by faith to throw all their concerns into the hands of God,

are seldom harassed by those petty hopes and fears, desires and aversions, which continually harass the sons and daughters of the world: these privileged persons are divested of that awkward consciousness which numbers feel who yet have address and cunning to hide it from the eyes of others.

While the party in the drawing-room were thus situated, Margarita appeared, simply dressed, but glowing with health, and utterly clear of all intent to captivate. She came gaily forward to her newly arrived aunt, and expressed her joy at seeing her, in a manner so artless, that the old lady, though usually cold hearted, was greatly pleased, and called her son to acknowledge his cousin, the daughter of her younger brother now no more; adding, “Margarita is like her father: she has his own dark blue eyes and bright bloom.” Augustus made his compliments to the young lady as desired, and sat down again, having a new object to attract his notice. Dorothea at length however becoming quite fidgetty because she was not made of more consequence, jumped up from her seat, and coming across the spacious room to her aunt, she addressed some questions to her in that pretty playful childish way which young ladies know how to assume when they think it suitable to their purpose. She soon perceived that she had gained her point; for the young heir no longer looked at Margarita, but at herself: and upon her putting some question about Ireland, which his mother referred to him, he rose up, joined the group, and gave his opinion in a sufficiently plain, sensible, and manly way—but speaking, as Dorothea remarked, more like one who was addressing his grandmother than a handsome cousin; for his face never relaxed into a smile, nor assumed any of those graces (real or imaginary) which persons are apt to call up when they desire to please.

In the mean time, the Captain sat considering whether it would be worth his while to try to please Margarita; and before he could make up his opinion on the subject, the party was called into the dining-room.

During dinner, Augustus said very little; and though Dorothea often addressed him, he always answered with the same serious manner which he had first used. In consequence of which, she still preserved her first opinion, which was, that he was extremely stupid. The captain,

however, and Lady Anna Maria, were sufficiently talkative; so that the former, before dinner was half over, had talked himself entirely into the good graces of Lady Harriet, who declared she had seldom seen a more agreeable man.

After dinner, when the ladies and gentlemen were assembled again in the drawing-room, there was indeed no want of conversation: for Lady Anna Maria talked without ceasing, the captain was all politeness and attention, Lady Harriet was animated, and Dorothea all tenderness and pretty affection for her aunt; but the young heir, the man of consequence, sat nearly silent, and looked thoughtful; though when addressed, he answered, as before, like a man of sense, which saved him from being set down by Dorothea as an absolute simpleton. He was also attentive: for Dorothea at one time dropped her glove, and at another time was so exceedingly careless as to entangle her netting silk with the foot of the table; on which occasions the young gentleman was ready to give his assistance, performing both offices for his fair cousin, yet without any change of countenance, not even putting on a smile.

After tea it was proposed that the younger part of the company should walk in the shrubbery; but just as they were setting out, Lady Harriet detained the captain in some slight conversation, at the same time requesting Margarita to clasp her bracelet, which very fortunately came undone at the moment they were taking their leave; and thus she contrived that Dorothea and the young heir should get the start of their companions.

While the young people were absent, Lady Harriet endeavoured to get from her sister as much information as she possibly could respecting the character of her son.—“Augustus is a fine young man, sister,” said Lady Harriet; “he must be a great comfort to you; he seems remarkably steady.”

This was quite sufficient to set Lady Anna Maria a-going. But unfortunately the old lady possessed that talent, which I am sorry to remark is no very rare one; namely the faculty of talking a very long time, and yet saying nothing. This talent, we must allow, is often a useful one in society, and particularly desirable in the courts of princes; though *such a one* as a man would perhaps rather wish to have at hand as occasion might require, than to possess as a natural gift incapable of being

laid aside. However that may be, the old lady in question possessed this talent in its utmost perfection; in consequence of which, when she had discoursed for about two hours (the young people being so long absent) upon the various qualifications of her son and other matters connected with him, the attentive and discerning Lady Harriet could draw no further conclusion respecting the young man, than that he was thought very handsome by some young ladies in Merrion Square; that he had looked remarkably well at a late ball given at the castle; that he was not careless in spending his money; that he had visited France and Italy; that he had some fine horses in his stable; and that he had planted a great many Scotch firs on a hitherto barren down near Claverton-castle.

"He seems very much attached to you, sister," said Lady Harriet.

"The best son in the world!" returned the other: "but, as I was saying, though I do not like Scotch firs, you know, sister, they afford a shelter, in a bleak situation, for other trees of a more beautiful appearance."

"Your son then has a taste for beautifying his place; he lays out a good deal of money no doubt in that way; it is probably his hobby-horse?" said Lady Harriet.

"It was poor Mr. Claverton's," said Lady Anna Maria; "and he really made the old castle very comfortable.". She then entered into a long description of the state of the castle when she first went to it, minutely describing the furniture of their drawing-room and state bed-room, and concluding by an account of a visit from the Lord Lieutenant when her son was about six years of age, together with the compliments which were paid to the young gentleman by the great man upon his dark eyes and raven ringlets.

As Lady Harriet could gain so little light upon the subject which then chiefly interested her, she was not sorry to see the young people come in again. "What do you think of the young heir?" said Lady Harriet to her daughter, as soon as they could find an opportunity of being together.

"O, he is very stupid," said Dorothea.

"What, did he not talk to you in the shrubbery?" said the artful mother.

Dorothea shrugged up her shoulders. "Yes, he talked to me; he certainly did speak to me; but really it was heavy work: I envied Margarita with the captain."

"She walked with Captain Freeman then all the evening?" said Lady Harriet.

"Yes," replied Dorothea. "I suppose they were pleased with each other, for they never offered to join us."

"Well," said Lady Harriet, "perhaps your cousin will brighten up a little in a few days, you must try to enliven him. But I don't think him stupid, Dorothea, he does not speak like a man who wants sense; you must not imagine that you have a fool to manage."

"I do not know what he wants," said Dorothea, putting up her lip; "but, at present, I know that he is an uncommonly heavy companion—not at all like an Irishman."

The next morning things passed off at breakfast much as on the former evening; after which, Augustus walked out in the grounds and about the park by himself; while Margarita repaired to her own room, where employments awaited her which at present she found considerably more interesting than any thing the drawing-room could afford.

Before dinner the party met again in the drawing-room, the company being augmented by the arrival of two gentlemen. Dorothea was evidently in low spirits, and complained of a headache. The captain drew near and condoled with her: but the captain was not the person whose attentions she required; and Augustus having entered into conversation with one of the visitors, did not observe her, although she put her hand frequently to her forehead, and at length asked Margarita to lend her a *vinaigrette*. "But indeed," added the young lady, "I do not know why I asked you; because you never deal in such articles."

"But tell me," said Margarita, "where I can get one, and I will fetch it for you."

"No, not for the world!" said Dorothea: "I would not give you the trouble for the world! Perhaps the air will relieve me." So saying, she walked nearer to the window; where the captain setting a chair, condoled

with her so effectually, that the attention of every one in the room was excited; and thus the young lady's end was answered.

Augustus observing this little bustle, broke off his discourse to ask what was the matter: and on being informed, he repaired to the window where the young lady was sitting, when with a solicitude of manner and an expression of interest, which gave a new glow to his fine countenance, he said, "Dear cousin, I fear you are suffering much; can we do any thing for your relief?"

"O, I shall be better by and by," said Dorothea: "but it is so shockingly hot—I never could support hot weather in my life; it makes me quite faint."

The young gentleman proposed that she should draw still nearer to the window, and used several expressions of sympathy, which carried with them the appearance of so much earnestness and sincerity, as could not fail to gratify Dorothea, who easily persuaded herself that his anxiety was to be attributed to something more than common humanity. Being solaced by this flattering persuasion, her spirits began to rise; and she soon declared herself much relieved, continuing in high spirits during the whole of the dinner-time.

After dinner, when the ladies withdrew into the drawing-room, they had not been long assembled, Dorothea sitting by her aunt and mother, and Margarita standing in the window, when Augustus appeared on the outside. The window opened to the ground, and the young man approached close to it, and taking hold of his cousin's hand in a playful way, with a smile which illuminated his whole countenance in a very agreeable manner, he thus addressed her:—"In order to hear the praises of some young ladies," he said, "we must visit crowded cities and courts; but there are others whose praises are whispered only in the silent groves and among the abodes of wood-nymphs and naiads."

Margarita was so astonished at the manner as well as the words of her cousin, so unlike any thing she had ever witnessed of him before, that she blushed deeply; but before she could make him any answer, having recovered his serious mood, and stepping over the window-frame into the room, he said in a low voice, "My dear Margarita, I was much pleased this morning at what I

accidentally heard of the manner in which you dispose of your time. To be kind to the poor, and attentive to their wants, is in fact no more than *our* duty, on whom the Almighty has been pleased to bestow his good things in abundance: notwithstanding which, it is a duty much neglected by many; and it therefore gave me particular pleasure when I heard this morning of your retired and modest benevolence."

Margarita mentioned Lady Susan, and professed how much she had been obliged to her.

"I have heard of her worth," returned Augustus—"her charity was warm, enlarged, and admirable in every respect: a few such examples will, I trust, profit the rising generation." The young man then proceeded to speak of Ireland; of the state of the poor on his property; of his anxiety to see their condition meliorated; and of certain plans which he had formed for their improvement.

It happened that Augustus and Margarita were got upon a subject equally interesting to both: and therefore it was the less wonderful if their conversation was protracted to a considerable length; if he looked animated and she pleased; and if there was a vivacity and spirit in the manner of each, which was the more remarkable, as they were both in general grave and calm in their habits.

It may well be imagined, that while this interesting conversation was passing between these young persons, Lady Harriet and Dorothea were not altogether at their ease; and it is likely that they would have found some occasion of cutting it short, if Lady Anna Maria had not unfortunately been in the midst of a long story, to which it was necessary apparently to listen. At length the story ended; but it was not till the captain and the other gentlemen had appeared upon the grassplot, calling Augustus to look at a very remarkable tree which one of the gentlemen was about to point out. In obedience to this call, Augustus sprung out of the window by which he had entered, leaving Margarita apparently lost in thought, though visibly pleased.

"You have been engaged in a very long conversation, Margarita," said Dorothea, rising and coming up to her cousin; "something very interesting, I am sure it was, for

you blushed once or twice so violently that even the back of your neck was tinged as pretty a red as ever I saw. What was your subject?"

Margarita hesitated; not because she was ashamed of any thing she had said, but because the topic was one on which she had been so frequently ridiculed.

"O, if you do not wish to tell, I am sure I have no desire to know," said Dorothea: "but I cannot imagine what secrets can be already existing between you and Augustus. However, it is nothing to me; I can have no possible wish to be in your confidence, or to know any thing you desire to hide."

"I have nothing to hide," returned Margarita; "but the truth is, that we have been speaking on a subject you do not like."

"What is that?" said Lady Harriet, whose curiosity had brought her to the window. "What possible subject can you have been speaking of to your cousin, which Dorothea does not like?"

"It was about," said Margarita, being somewhat puzzled how to express the sentiment without giving offence; "it was about the poor we were speaking."

Lady Harriet shook her head; as much as to say, "Art—deep art;" and Dorothea added, scornfully, "So you have been recommending yourself to Augustus by a detail of your good works, Margarita!"

"I!" said Margarita, "I have not, I assure you, been talking about myself."

"You only expressed your regard for the poor then in general terms, and left him to infer that this regard had not been an idle one?" replied Dorothea.

"I tell you, my dear cousin," returned Margarita, "that neither my sentiments nor my actions formed any part of our conversation, as I recollect; but Mr. Claverton seems to be very anxious to do good among the poor in Ireland, and he was asking me some questions upon the best means of serving them effectually."

"And you offered to lend him your text-book, I suppose," said Dorothea, "*The Economy of Charity?*"

"I never once mentioned the book," said Margarita: "I did not think of it."

"But tell me," said Lady Harriet, "how was this interesting conversation introduced?"

Margarita blushed and hesitated; for at that instant she recollect ed the compliment to herself, with which the conversation commenced; and she could not bring herself to repeat it.

“O, very well,” said Lady Harriet, “Margarita refuses us her confidence; and I beg it may be solicited no further.” She was then turning away, when Margarita taking her hand, “Only one moment, dear aunt,” she said, “you shall hear it all.” And she repeated Augustus’s words when he first addressed her at the window as nearly as she could recollect them.

The two ladies affected to laugh, though evidently angry, while they walked back to the sofa, where Lady Anna Maria was sitting; which being at the very remote end of the large room, the old lady had not been able to overhear a word that had been spoken in the window. The rest of the evening passed as usual. The party walked out after tea: but Margarita, who suspected that her aunt was not pleased with her, withdrew to her own room, where she employed herself in her usual way; either drawing, or working with her needle, while Rachel read to her.

The next morning Dorothea sent her maid to Margarita to borrow *The Economy of Charity*: a request which was instantly granted, while it excited no little surprise on the part of Margarita; for being by the favour of heaven exceedingly artless herself, she had no suspicion of art in others. This same morning, however, coming down to breakfast somewhat later than usual, she found the company deep in conversation. The matter of their conversation was the state of the poor in Ireland; and Dorothea was hearkening with apparently strong interest to what Augustus was saying on the subject.

“I should think nothing more likely to civilize and humanize these poor creatures,” said Dorothea, in reply to his statements, “than the establishment of schools. Have you seen our school at the end of the park? I assure you it is a very well conducted school, and the children are so neat, so orderly, so properly instructed, it is quite a treat to look at them.”

“What say you to a walk across the park this morning to see our little seminary?” said Lady Harriet; “my daughter will gladly accompany you.”

“Or, suppose,” said the captain, “Mr. Claverton were

to drive Miss Mowbray in his phaeton : do not let us forget what she suffered yesterday from heat."

Augustus acquiesced in this arrangement, and the phaeton was ordered.

Soon after breakfast, Margarita withdrew, and Dorothea with her mother and aunt went into the drawing-room, where Dorothea placed herself in the bow-window on a settee, and was deeply engaged in reading, or at least seemed to be so.

When the phaeton was ready, Augustus came in, and walking up to Dorothea, "Well, my fair lady," he said, "are you ready?"

Dorothea immediately jumped up, and saying, "Wait a moment, and I shall be at your service," she threw the book down on a small table which stood by her chair, and tripped out of the room.

It was very natural for Augustus to sit down for the moment he had to wait, on the chair which she had left, and as natural for him to take up the book she had laid down.

My reader, if he has some insight into character, will not be surprised to hear that this book proved to be *The Economy of Charity*; though perchance, if he has no penetration of that kind, he may be ready to exclaim, "I thought that Miss Dorothea hated this book so much, that she had even interdicted the mention of its title!" But be this as it may, I here request you, my gentle reader, to stop for a moment, and if you have ever read or practised *The Economy of Charity*, enquire in this place what your motives have been for so doing: remembering the words of our blessed Lord—*Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.* *Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men.* *Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.* *But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.* (Matt. vi. 1—4.)

When Dorothea returned a few minutes afterwards in her elegant riding-hat and scarf, she was not much astonished to see Augustus with her book in his hand: she however said nothing, but suffered him to lead her to the

phaeton. I will not pretend to describe how prettily during their drive Dorothea talked of schools, alms-houses, and other little contrivances for bettering the state of the poor ; how affable and polite she was to Mrs. Green ; and how sweetly condescending to the little children : suffice it to say, that the young people returned in good spirits, and nothing happened during the remainder of the evening to disturb their cheerfulness.

In the mean time, sundry reflections, such as will intrude themselves to destroy the peace and happiness of youth, had crowded themselves upon the mind of Margarita : her thoughts were to this effect, and my reader will excuse me if I arrange them in the form of a soliloquy. “ Augustus Claverton is a very handsome young man. I have seldom seen one who smiles so sweetly—to be sure he does not smile often : but then that makes it the more acceptable when a smile does appear. And then he seems so desirous to do good, and *that* apparently from the best motives. I should like to enjoy a little more of his company. I am quite as nearly related to him as Dorothea: and if any one were to be employed to shew him the school, it ought to have been myself; because I visit it every week, and have deprived myself of many comforts, to supply the poor children with books and clothes. But I see my aunt wishes to throw me into the back-ground ; she is almost offended if any one speaks to me.”

In this soliloquy we shall find the expression of many very evil passions, which threatened speedily to destroy all the peace of this amiable young person. But evil thoughts will arise in the mind ; they are the torment of the saints on earth, the fruit of that evil nature, which, notwithstanding the power of grace, continues and will continue in one degree or other till sin is swallowed up in death. It is however one peculiar work of the Spirit to make man sensible of his evil nature, and to furnish him with power for contending with it. Accordingly, no sooner had these thoughts passed the mind of Margarita, than she became sensible of their vileness, and lost not a moment in throwing herself on her knees to plead for help from above. Within her room was a light closet ; thither she retired, and having shut the door, she prayed earnestly and ardently for assistance in this time of need. Nor was she long without an answer to her

prayer : for presently such a spirit of humility was shed upon her, as excited a conviction that it was good and right for her to be thus tried ; and that it was for her advantage that her works of charity should be thrown into the back-ground. She was also made to feel that the secret complacency she had hitherto experienced in her little acts of benevolence, was sinful ; and that she needed this correction in order to detect the impurity of her motives. Being thus self-abased, and almost wondering at the wish she had lately entertained of being brought forward in society, she came at length to this conclusion—“ It is quite as well that my cousin sees so little of me, since I am convinced that he is far from wanting penetration : for if I were to converse freely with him, all the imperfections of my character might probably be made apparent—imperfections, some of which I am myself sensible of, and others of which perhaps I have never yet suspected myself ; for the Scripture saith, *The heart is desperately wicked, who can know it?*”

The history of Telemachus, by the celebrated Archbishop of Cambray, has been much admired, and particularly that passage in which Minerva the goddess of wisdom is described as guarding the young man by her ægis from the arrows of love. But surely this allegory would have been infinitely more beautiful, though perhaps not so classical, if humility could have supplied him with her mantle for his protection ; since humility is the guardian power which protects the heedless steps of inexperience, and effectually wards off a thousand dangers which threaten the destruction of presumptuous youth.

But to return to our narrative. The mind of Margarita being thus relieved from the influence of unworthy passions, and again left at liberty to pursue its usual objects, she took a review of the duties she had to execute, as well as of certain little plans which she had lately formed with a view to the enlargement of her charities. For Edmund and Rachel being no longer entirely dependent upon her, and her supplies being increased, she had resolved, before the arrival of the party from Ireland, to seek out certain poor widows residing in the neighbouring hamlets, in order to assist them with clothes and money : she determined therefore now to send Martha Lawley privately to look them out, and to enquire into their wants. But

inasmuch as this would require some time, and she needed present employment to divert her thoughts, she had recourse to her stores of coarse cloth and homespun woolen: so beginning immediately to cut out coats and garments, she presently became so engaged in this interesting concern, that Augustus Claverton and Dorothea were totally forgotten.

“We had better take these petticoats and caps to Mrs. Green, Ma’am,” said Rachel; “the children will want work, and it is a good thing to supply them with employment.”

“No, no, Rachel,” said Margarita, “we will not send them at present, I have my reasons for it: we will do this work ourselves, and then nobody will hear of it but those who may be the better for it.”

Rachel had been accustomed to acquiesce in all her mistress’s arrangements, and possessed not a little of her mistress’s active and benevolent spirit. She accordingly set to work, and Margarita with her, and with so much spirit, that the young lady had just completed a blue linsey woolsey petticoat, and was displaying it in its full length and amplitude, admiring not a little her own exploits, and thinking how comfortable it would make some old woman when frost and snow should take place of the balmy gales which now saluted her from the open window—when she was warned by the dressing-bell that other business awaited her. She hastily threw down the petticoat, saying, “O! what shall I do to get the blue dye off my hands and face; fly, fly to Mrs. Hill, Rachel, for a lemon: do not let me be mistaken for Blue Beard.”

The lemon was produced, and every thing set to rights, yet not so speedily, but that the company were all assembled in the drawing-room before she was fit to make her appearance. As it was very hot, the drawing-room door as well as the windows were open; and Margarita coming in quietly, set herself down on the first chair, not immediately perceiving (for there were several visitors in the room) that Augustus and Dorothea were seated close to her on a sofa, whose high back and sides had in part concealed them from her. However, as she was seated, she did not think it right to move, and thus could not help hearing part of their conversation.

“I was much gratified this morning,” said Augustus;

“but you must have taken considerable pains for the introduction of so much neatness and order in a seminary of that kind; the work of a superior hand to that of the old dame’s is evident throughout.”

Dorothea was leaning back on the sofa, and looking down at the fan with which she was playing, “Certainly,” she said, “some pains have been taken; but Dame Green is a good old woman, and very manageable.”

“Well,” said Augustus, “I wish I had some one in Ireland who could manage some of the old dames there as well as you have managed Dame Green. But I fear that I shall tire you with this subject: the melioration of the state of the Irish poor is at present my hobby-horse. I had a tutor, a very worthy man, who never walked out with me but he amused me with his schemes of this kind. My mother says, he was assuredly a little deranged: certainly he had a very glowing imagination, and his conversation has left no slight impression on my mind.”

“He must have been a dear amiable creature,” said Dorothea, “with all his eccentricities. How long has he left you?”

“He was removed from me by death,” said Augustus, “a very few years past; and the loss, I assure you, was a painful one to me.”

The call to dinner now terminated this conversation, and the evening concluded with a walk: during which, Lady Harriet, who accompanied the party, very obligingly took Margarita’s arm. Lady Harriet had intended to have given a ball during the residence of her nephew and sister at Mowbray-hall; but was diverted from her purpose by not being quite sure whether an amusement of this kind would suit Augustus’s taste. She therefore altered her plan, and substituted, in the place of the ball, occasional visits to the seats of the neighbouring gentry which were best worth seeing, and a kind of gala for the poor in the park, where prizes were to be given for spinning, &c. &c. The prizes were to be distributed by Dorothea, who, elegantly dressed on the occasion, and smiling sweetly and affably, won every one’s admiration by the grace with which she performed her part. In these kind of amusements several weeks passed away, in which Dorothea had certainly contrived to remove the reserve which her cousin had first discovered: but neither the young lady nor her

mother could find out whether she had made any real advances in his good graces. Dorothea however had discovered that this man, whom she had at first called a fool, was a person of deep penetration; one who thought much, and was so manly and upright in his own conduct, as scarcely to appear sensible that there could be such a thing as art and finesse in others, particularly among well educated and respectable people.

In the mean time the gallant captain made his way in the favour of Lady Harriet, who found him very useful on occasion of any party of pleasure, in taking care of Margarita, and thus keeping her out of the way of her cousin. Accordingly, whenever they walked out, or engaged in any party of pleasure, things were so arranged, that Captain Freeman was to be thrown with Margarita. "Captain Freeman," Lady Harriet would say, "you will drive my niece in my phaeton :" or, "You will stay for Margarita, for that giddy girl Dorothea is gone off and left her. Margarita, my dear, you are tired: Captain Freeman, do give her your arm; what can make so polite a man as you are, so backward ?"

Captain Freeman had no manner of objection to walking with Margarita, though he was not altogether pleased at being put off with the niece, in order that the young heir might enjoy the daughter's company. Without hesitation, however, he acquiesced very politely, being upon the whole satisfied that he had not Lady Anna Maria leaning upon his arm on every occasion.

"I wish," said Margarita one day to her aunt, "that I could avoid being so much with Captain Freeman; I don't know what to say to him; he will think me very tiresome, I fear."

"My dear," said Lady Harriet, "Captain Freeman is a visitor at Mowbray-hall, and a stranger; it is necessary to treat him with politeness."

"But perhaps he may think it odd if I am always left with him," said the young lady.

"Permit me to judge of what is right and proper, niece," said Lady Harriet, somewhat offended: "I certainly may be supposed to be as good a judge of these matters as a girl of seventeen."

Thus Margarita gained nothing by her expostulation; and, in consequence, as she could not get rid of this awk-

ward *tête à tête*, she confined herself as much as possible to her own apartment whenever the family went abroad.

The family from Ireland had been about three weeks at Mowbray-hall, when Margarita one morning stole through the most retired parts of the shrubbery, to the cottage of Martha Lawley, in order to speak to her upon some of those affairs which so greatly occupied her. Having been in the cottage for some time, her eye suddenly fell upon a gentleman's glove which was lying on a table.—“Whose glove is that?” she said, in alarm: “if any gentlemen come here, I must haste away.”

“Mr. Claverton has been here several times,” returned Martha; “and he called yesterday, and left his glove behind him: I thought to have taken it this morning to the hall.”

“You had better leave it where it is, Martha,” said Margarita. And she was going to ask what business he could have there; but recollecting herself, she put no further questions, although she saw, by the old woman's face, that she was very ready to answer any she might choose to ask. Lady Susan had very strenuously pressed this caution upon Margarita, to beware of talking with the poor except upon their own business, or on religious subjects; never allowing them to communicate news or repeat tales. Martha was fully aware of Miss Margarita's delicacy in this particular; and therefore she dared not to repeat what she wished to tell, though it cost her not a little to be silent.

Margarita having finished her business, hastened home, taking a circuitous course, in order that she might not meet any one coming to the cottage, and determining to return there no more till the Irish family were gone. But the very means which she took to avoid meeting any one, proved to be the occasion of her falling into the company she sought to shun; for entering into a retired and embowered walk of the shrubbery, she suddenly saw before her Augustus Claverton talking with Edmund. At sight of them she rather started, and would have returned; but perceiving that they observed her, she thought it best to proceed: so as she advanced, Edmund bowed low and withdrew, while Augustus came forward to meet her.—“My dear little cousin,” he said, with unusual animation, “how delighted I am to see you alone;

this is an unexpected pleasure, and such a one as I have long waited for."

"Long waited for!" repeated Margarita, smiling. "Ah! Augustus, how difficult it is even for relations to speak to each other with simplicity!"

"Margarita," said the young man, with warmth, "I don't deserve this reproof: I have for some time past ardently desired to increase my acquaintance with you, whom I have a right to love as a relation, and whom I ought to love as a Christian; for indeed, Margarita, your unaffected modesty, your unassuming benevolence, and your patient resignation to the will of your relations, are all well known to me, and will never cease to excite my admiration."

Margarita was dumb with astonishment; and while she remained silent, Augustus proceeded to add more to what he had already uttered, using the same strain of high encomium, which it is not necessary here to repeat. And will my reader be surprised to hear that, instead of making any reply, the young lady, being overcome with astonishment to find herself the subject of so much commendation where she believed herself to be wholly disregarded and overlooked, burst into a gentle flood of tears?

"My dear cousin," said Augustus, on seeing this, "what have I done? what have I said? have I in any way afflicted you?"

"No, Sir," said Margarita; "but I do not think myself worthy of your high opinion; and I do not like to appropriate to myself these encomiums."

"Do not, then, my lovely cousin," returned Augustus: "but still retain your modesty, the sweetest ornament of the female sex. I beg your pardon for having said so much, but you took me by surprise: only, my dear cousin, let me entreat you to give us more of your company; have I not the same title to enjoy it as that of Dorothea? But you always are so reserved, so backward; and thus you give Captain Freeman the opportunity of constant access to you. Do not, Margarita, allow too great an intimacy there; that man has no heart."

"Sir," said Margarita, "it is not my wish; it is my aunt's." She hesitated; for she knew not what more to

add: and indeed she feared that she had said too much already.

"I understand, I fully comprehend this manœuvre," said Augustus, indignantly: "but it shall not be so again; unless," added he, "you desire it, Margarita."

"O! Augustus," said Margarita, reproachfully, "how can you think that possible?"

They were now arrived at a place where the narrow path entered into the more public part of the shrubbery. "Stop one moment, dear cousin," said Augustus, "I hear voices; and I have much to say to you."

Before she could reply, the voices approached, and Dorothea appeared in view, followed by her mother.— "Augustus! I declare," she said, "and Margarita! Upon my word this is very fine, very picturesque, quite pathetic."

"Hush, hush," said Lady Harriet; "be tranquil." So saying, she stepped forward, and with her usual ease asked Margarita where she had been.—"I was looking for you half an hour ago in your own room, my dear girl," she said, "to solicit your assistance in a little case of distress which has been just brought before me."

Margarita was relieved by this seeming kindness, and simply told her aunt where she had been, and how she had met her cousin on her return.

"Come, my dear girl," said Lady Harriet, "now give me your arm, and I will tell you my distressed case." So saying, she stepped forward with her niece, leaving her daughter and Augustus together, not doubting but that Dorothea would have self-command not to display her feelings in an improper way before him. Nor had this artful mother miscalculated her daughter's powers: for during her walk home Dorothea was all gaiety as usual, though Augustus was evidently thoughtful and seconded her but feebly. As soon however as they arrived at the house, Dorothea sought a private interview with her mother; during which she gave way to the highest expression of her jealous indignation, charging Margarita with the deepest dissimulation. I shall not trouble my reader with a very particular account of the conversation between this ambitious mother and daughter, but shall simply say, that it was resolved by both that Margarita should be closely watched, and that Dorothea should

make no change in her conduct towards either of her cousins.

After this adventure of the garden, Margarita very carefully avoided walking out by herself; and things went on much in the same way as they had done before, till a party was proposed to visit a neighbouring gentleman's seat. This party was spoken of at breakfast, and the arrangements made afterwards.—“Your cousin Augustus,” said Lady Harriet, “will drive you, Dorothea, in his phaeton; Captain Freeman will take care of Margarita in our open carriage; and Lady Anna Maria and I will take our places in my carriage.”

The captain bowed; Margarita blushed and looked down; and Dorothea said, “If my cousin Augustus will be kind enough not to drive so very fast down hill, which terrifies me to death, I shall be very happy to accompany him.”

While these arrangements were in agitation, Mr. Claverton appeared to be so deeply engaged with a book that he did not seem to hear a word of what was passing, till his mother called to him, and asked if he were totally deaf.

Augustus looked up, and seeming attentive, Dorothea repeated what she had said before. “I think,” said he, “you had better try the captain's driving, Dorothea, if you are so alarmed.”

“Well, then, it shall be so,” said Lady Harriet; “and, instead of my daughter, you shall take me, Augustus; for I love an open carriage.” There was not a word to be said about this arrangement; and the ill-assorted parties set out all equally dissatisfied with each other.

On arriving at the appointed place, Lady Harriet had prepared a manœuvre for fastening her daughter on her nephew, and succeeded in her plan: but the consequence was, that Augustus was gloomy and silent, Dorothea offended, and the whole party thrown into confusion. At length, seeing that he was determinately silent and ill-humoured, Dorothea said to him, “I cannot think, cousin, what is the matter with you: have I offended you?”

“I am not pleased,” said Augustus, “I will confess. Why do you continually abandon Margarita to the care of a man with whom you have only a very slight acquaintance? Why do you not give her more of your countenance and support?”

"You have spoken out at last," said Dorothea, highly offended: "this shall never happen again; nor would it have happened now, had not Margarita herself acquiesced in and even wished this arrangement."

"Impossible!" said Augustus.

"Possible or impossible," returned Dorothea, "it is nevertheless perfectly true; and you are at liberty to question my mother upon the subject: but be it as it may, I will leave you henceforward to take care of her yourself." So saying, she withdrew her hand and fell back, while he remained in a state of the utmost perplexity.

The party were now arrived at a root-house, where a cold collation was prepared; and here they all sat down in a state of such ill-humour, that, had it not been for the talents of the gallant captain, things would have passed off very heavily. However, the captain having exerted himself to some purpose, they prepared to walk again with tolerable complacency, though assorted in a manner very different from that in which they had begun their walk; Lady Harriet having been instructed by her daughter to accompany Augustus, while Margarita was left with Lady Anna Maria.

When Augustus was alone with his aunt, he told her what had passed between him and Dorothea, and asked her if it were possible that Margarita should covet Captain Freeman's society.

"I can make no reply to this question," said Lady Harriet; "judge for yourself: and observe," added this lady, "I would not injure my niece in your opinion for the world."

After this distressing tour, the party returned all dissatisfied with one another: and this kind of dissatisfaction continued several days; during which time, every one appeared to be at cross purposes, no one fully understanding the secret motives by which the conduct of the rest was influenced. Augustus was cold, silent, and reserved; keenly observing all that passed. Dorothea was impenetrable, but affecting unconcern. Margarita kept much to herself, and was very busy with her woollen petticoats, endeavouring not to think of any thing else. Lady Anna Maria in the whole scene saw nothing remarkable, and, as usual, felt for no one but herself;

while the captain, from some unaccountable change of feelings, seemed only occupied by Margarita.

In this manner several days passed; when suddenly Augustus gave notice that he was about to return to Ireland on particular business: and the next morning he took his departure with an abruptness which astonished every one, and for which nobody could assign any probable reason.

When Margarita heard of his departure, after feeling thankful that she had been so little with him and thought so little of him, she returned with new energy to her usual occupations: but Dorothea betrayed a degree of agitation, which she had so little power to conceal, as compelled her mother to use very strong arguments in order to reduce her to reason.—“He is an odd, a very odd young man, Dorothea,” she said; “he is not worth a serious thought.”

“O!” said Dorothea, “I am convinced that it is Margarita who has done this mischief; and I know it is because he believed that she was attached to Captain Freeman that he has left us in this strange way.”

“And perhaps he will return in as strange a one by and by,” said Lady Harriet. “I only wish that Captain Freeman would take Margarita out of the way, and then every thing would be right again.”

“But do you imagine that Captain Freeman seriously thinks of her?” said Dorothea.

“I do,” said Lady Harriet: “I have put it into my sister’s head, and she has given the captain encouragement.”

“And yet,” said Dorothea, “I do not imagine he has any serious thoughts of her.”

“Why not?” said Lady Harriet; “it would be a great thing for him; Margarita has twelve thousand pounds.”

“But she is such an oddity,” said Dorothea;—“such a determined oddity.”

“She is however a pleasing modest girl, to do her justice,” said Lady Harriet.

“I cannot see it,” returned Dorothea; “and I am sure Captain Freeman has no serious thoughts of her.”

“I should be much offended,” said Lady Harriet, “if such a man as that did not think it an honour to be allied

to a granddaughter of the Earl of G——, and a niece of Lady Harriet Mowbray."

Dorothea put up her lip at this, but what she meant thereby cannot be easily ascertained.

Now inasmuch as in the course of this narrative I have been obliged to bring forward many characters with the similitudes of which, I trust, you may never be acquainted; and to retail many conversations of no profitable tendency; I shall hasten over as concisely as possible some of the events which followed the departure of Augustus Claverton from Mowbray-hall.—During a week all things remained nearly as Augustus had left them: Margarita being utterly unacquainted with her aunt's schemes relative to Captain Freeman; and Dorothea continually evidencing a degree of dissatisfaction, which her mother attributing to the departure of Augustus, used every means in her power to moderate; often calling upon the captain to walk with her daughter, to play with her at backgammon, and to amuse her in other ways. The agitation of Dorothea did not diminish, and at the end of ten days she and the gallant captain were one morning missing; when, by a letter found on the young lady's dressing-table, Lady Harriet was apprized that she must make up her mind to receive that man as her son-in-law, whom she had never coveted in any other point of view than as a nephew. To paint the rage and indignation of Lady Harriet on this occasion is as unnecessary as it would be difficult. She however made a determination, when she understood that the thing was irrevocable, never to see her daughter more; never to acknowledge her son-in-law; and not to leave her daughter a shilling in her will.

In the mean time, the unprincipled pair made their way with all speed to Scotland, where they were married; after which, they returned to England, and arriving in the neighbourhood of Mowbray-hall, Dorothea wrote a very humble letter to her mother, imploring her pardon. Lady Harriet tore the letter in pieces, and again declared that she henceforward renounced her daughter. A second letter was then sent under cover to Margarita, requesting her good offices; on which occasion this excellent young lady braved the utmost resentment of her aunt, who charged her never more to mention Dorothea's name

before her. At the same time she gave her permission to send Dorothea her books and clothes and whatever else belonged to her. With these things Margarita inclosed five guineas of her own, being the only money she could then command. Dorothea had fifteen thousand pounds; part of which had been left by her father, and the rest bequeathed to her by other relations, of which her mother could not deprive her: but not being yet of age, she could not at present touch this money. Margarita therefore supposed that she would be in immediate distress, as Captain Freeman's income was very small; and this circumstance she failed not to state to Lady Harriet: but by so doing she inflamed the anger and resentment of the mother to a still higher degree; for the very thought of her daughter having reduced herself to such straits, hurt the pride of Lady Harriet beyond all conception.

When Dorothea found that nothing was at present to be done with her mother, she accompanied her husband to Ireland, where we will leave them for the present.

In the mean time, Celia returned to Mowbray-hall; and Lady Anna Maria left it, in order to pay a visit to her brother the Earl of G—.

Rather earlier in the season than usual this year, Lady Harriet took her family to town; with the double motive of dispelling her grief, and making the world believe that she was not in any degree humbled or cast down by the unfortunate marriage of her daughter. But she had not been long in town when she was seized with a violent disorder, supposed to be the effect of mental uneasiness; by which she was brought into such a state of languor as confined her to her room during the whole winter. At this time, Margarita, finding that the presence of Fanny had a consolatory effect on her mother, begged that she might be kept at home, promising to take the charge of her education.

The winter passed away in a melancholy manner in London, and on the appearance of spring, Lady Harriet returned to the country, leaving Celia with Mrs. Dashwood, who was now become one of the gayest ladies about town.

Shortly after the family had fixed themselves again in the country, a marriage of a much more promising nature

took place, with the sanction of all friends. This was between Edmund and Rachel, who had been attached to each other from childhood. Margarita established them in the little tenement she possessed in Wales, which had been bequeathed to her by Lady Susan; furnishing their house from the money which she had saved during the winter, and regretting that she could not herself go over to see every thing arranged to her own taste. She was only able at first, however, to supply the young couple with bare necessaries: but she afterwards added the furniture of two pretty rooms at one end of the tenement, in which an old lady had formerly lodged, and where Margarita used often to say she would herself reside when she was grown old.

In this situation Edmund was to have the care of a small farm appertaining to the house, and old Martha Lawley was to live with them, for the purpose of assisting them with her counsel, and helping Rachel in her family cares. This happy little party shed many tears on taking leave of their benefactress, when Edmund confessed that he had known from the very first to whom he was indebted for the numerous favours he had received. Margarita felt an inclination to excuse Edmund from paying her any rent; but Mrs. Hill advised her to receive the rent duly from the young people: adding, "If you choose, Miss Margarita, you may lay the rent by for them till they are old, or make them a present of it in some other form; but do not absolve them from paying it, since you would thereby deprive them of one stimulus to industry: and assuredly if they are not disposed to help themselves, you can do nothing effectually to serve them."

As this sentiment agreed entirely with the spirit of Margarita's favourite book, she soon acquiesced in it. And Rachel being now gone, she devoted her undivided time to her aunt and Fanny; fully convinced that the situation of the family at this time demanded the exercise of all those charitable feelings which had hitherto been engaged only in the easier offices of alms-giving and instructing the poor. Since the loss of her health and the destruction of her projects for Dorothea, Lady Harriet had become highly irritable; and as she somehow or other attributed her failure respecting Mr. Claverton entirely to Margarita, notwithstanding all the kind attentions

of her niece, she always treated her with harshness, and displayed in her presence all the ill-humour to which her disappointed ambition made her subject.

Fanny, however, grew fond of her cousin, and clung closely to her; and the happiest hours which Margarita experienced, were those which she spent alone with this little girl, who was rather small and childish of her age—a circumstance which rendered her more fit to be the pupil of so young an instructress.

During this winter, Robert Mowbray returned from abroad. He was then one-and-twenty; at which time he was to enter into possession of his estates, and Lady Harriet was to give up Mowbray-hall. On her son's arrival, he made her a slight offer of retaining the place as long as she pleased: but Lady Harriet had too high a spirit to lay herself under obligations to her son. She accordingly took a house in town; and within six weeks of her son's being of age, she took her final leave of the country: leaving the young man to pull down and destroy at his pleasure, what might make it necessary to marry an heiress in order to assist him in rebuilding and restoring at some future period.

Lady Harriet having no longer a permanent dwelling in the country, established herself in a handsome house in Grosvenor Square, and was flattering herself with the prospect of enjoying life there for many years, when she was seized with some inward disease of an exceedingly painful nature; by which she might have been admonished of the vanity of this world, and the need of making preparation for a better. But inasmuch as afflictions were not sanctified to her, she clung more closely than ever to the world, notwithstanding her bodily anguish, and was more and more occupied with anxious thoughts concerning the present well-doing of her children. This was the subject on which she meditated through her long and sleepless nights, and that with which she entertained all who came to see her: for, as is very commonly the case with persons who are not pious as age advances and infirmities press, she had become extremely anxious about money, and was continually pressing economy in general upon her children; not considering that this would have been needless, had she early instructed them in *The Economy of Charity*. For this study, as I have elsewhere intimated,

includes self-denial, accurate management, and a correct estimate of the value of money. Lady Harriet's children had however never known the value of money; and the consequence was, that Robert Mowbray and Mrs. Dashwood were now lavishing it without the least reflection, while Celia was over head and ears in debt with every tradesman of the family who dealt in any article with which she could possibly have any concern. There were not wanting those who carried the report of these extravagances to poor Lady Harriet, now extended on the bed of anguish: and thus these meddling persons added fuel to the flame which was consuming this unhappy creature.

While things were in this state, it was reported to Lady Harriet that Mrs. Freeman was in town, having arrived with her husband from Ireland.

Lady Harriet shuddered when she heard this information, and said to Margarita, "I charge you not to bring her here, nor to attempt any thing in her favour. I never will forgive her. To her I attribute my present indisposition, with all the sufferings to which it exposes me."

"Nay, Madam," said Margarita, "these are the lot of all—the common infirmities of our nature: do not lay them to her charge. Her distress, I am sure, is sufficient, in being under your displeasure."

"Not another word," said Lady Harriet. "I never can forgive her."

Captain and Mrs. Freeman had been in Dublin for more than a year, where the captain had assisted himself by gambling; but having at length, by certain unaccountable successes, rendered his character suspected, he had come to London resolving to prop up his ruined credit a little longer by the credit and eclat of his wife's relations. Dorothea had made no objection to this arrangement, because she was anxious to be received again in her own family.

As it was well known that Mrs. Freeman would have a handsome property when she came of age, Captain Freeman found no difficulty in raising a considerable sum from the money-lenders, upon the credit of this property; and with this sum in hand he hired a handsome house, collected a large establishment, and having provided himself with all the paraphernalia of a man of fa-

shion, endeavoured to introduce himself to Mr. Dashwood and Robert Mowbray. Mr. Dashwood however had been told that his wife might be a loser if she disobeyed her mother's injunctions not to notice her sister. He therefore looked very coolly upon the captain; and Robert Mowbray treated him with the most open contempt. Having failed in these quarters, Captain Freeman tried others of his wife's connexions; but had no reason to boast of his success with any. Seeing this to be the case, he altered his conduct, affected independence, and again getting admittance into gambling houses, grew familiar with that kind of company which is to be found in such places.

Dorothea was at first hurt by the entire neglect of her sisters, and the coldness of her other relations: but after a while, her grief turning into indignation, she resolved to appear in public, to put on as much gaiety as ever, and to let her connexions see that she was as indifferent to them as they were to her. She accordingly procured new dresses at the houses of her mother's tradespeople, where she had credit on account of her family; was seen constantly in public; and if she happened to meet her brother and sister, would treat them with the same cold independence which they used towards her.

For a while all passed on smoothly: money came in for immediate use, and although bills accumulated, yet, as the hour of payment was not arrived, Dorothea by no means troubled herself as to their number or their extent. She had always been in the habit of saying, that she hated economy as a very vulgar thing: she had never felt the want of money, and imagined that she never should. All this answered very well, while fortune favoured Captain Freeman at the gambling table: but after a while, this lady, who is so proverbially fickle that she ought never to be trusted with the concerns of a wise man, changing her countenance, he suffered several very severe losses: nevertheless, as he had not yet exhausted his credit with the usurers, he was enabled to raise other sums, with which he tried his fortune again, with various success.

In the mean time, the happiness of the married couple, which had never been great, gradually decreased. Captain Freeman became gloomy and morose at home,

and Dorothea not being backward to notice this change of temper, mutual reproaches ensued, which commonly ended in tears and hysterics on the part of the lady, and not seldom in oaths and curses on the part of the gentleman. Dorothea had one little infant, a very lovely boy, who was born a little while previous to their removal from Dublin. It would not be just to say that she had no natural affection for this child—on the contrary, she had many paroxysms (if I may be allowed to use the expression) of motherly tenderness. But like all other paroxysms they were irregular and various, and never sufficiently protracted to enable her to make the sacrifice even of what she considered the smallest gratification.

During one of the disputes which occasionally arose between this unhappy pair, the following conversation took place.—“I certainly,” said Captain Freeman, “expected to find ease and comfort in my connexion with a young lady of your family and fortune: and, as I stated to you immediately after our marriage, we might have lived in some comfort, with economy, till your friends were reconciled; but economy and retirement were things which you protested against, while your expences both in Dublin and in this place have rendered it necessary for me to obtain assistance in a way which is both dangerous and precarious.”

In reply to this, Dorothea answered that she had been deceived; that she had been taught to think her husband’s income much greater than it was; and pointed out, too plainly to be mistaken, that he himself had led the way to this deception when at Mowbray-hall.

“ You then thought me a rich man,” said Captain Freeman, “ and married me on that account?”

“ I was infatuated at that time,” returned Dorothea, bursting into tears.

“ Infatuated when you married me!” returned the captain; “ and this from you? But permit me, Madam, now we are in the humour to speak truth, which humour however I wish to heaven had taken us a little sooner; permit me to say, that I have gained as little by marrying you as you have gained by me; all I can boast of is, that I have become the scorn and jest of all your great relations—this is the utmost I have to boast from the connexion.”

"My fortune, at any rate," returned Dorothea, "is handsome: more than you were entitled to expect."

"Yes, Madam," replied the Captain: "your fortune would be something, if you did not by your extravagances compel me to take it up at great disadvantage before it is due."

"Not my extravagances," said Dorothea: "I do not owe many hundreds."

"May be not," said the captain, "if you speak only of your private debts. But on whose account have I taken this large house? and for whom do I entertain this large establishment?"

"If the whole of my property is to go before I am of age," said Dorothea, "it must be owing to your gambling it away: and I am sure that my trustees will not deliver it up when I am of age for such purposes."

"Remember, Madam," said the captain, with a sneer, "that I am your husband; that what is yours is mine; and that there were no settlements drawn before our marriage, to bind your property from me. When you are of age, I have a right to claim your property, and I will assuredly do so."

"Then it appears," said Dorothea, weeping violently, "that I must be a beggar."

The captain made some very insolent answer, and, taking up his hat, walked out of the room.

It may be readily conjectured, that after such a conversation as I have related, a separation between this unhappy pair was almost unavoidable: but Captain Freeman had reasons of his own for keeping up appearances with his wife, at least till she should come of age. And as this period was not very far distant, he contrived so to manage matters, that this unprincipled pair continued to live together as before, at least another year.

In the mean time, Lady Harriet continued to linger on the bed of pain, while Robert Mowbray and the Dashwood family proceeded in their extravagant course, daily spending their money in the most lavish and tonish style. During this period, Celia was married to the younger son of a noble family, whom she accompanied to Italy; while Fanny and Margarita remained in the house in Grosvenor Square, living in much retirement—little Fanny growing in grace, through the divine blessing, under the gentle

tutorage of her young teacher; and Margarita herself continually improving by the steadiness of her own efforts to improve her little pupil, according to that which is written, *They that water shall be watered.*

At length the season arrived when Dorothea became of age: at which time she received her property into her own possession, that is to say, at the mercy of her husband; for her fortune having been left entirely at her own command, there was no method of withholding it from him, or of appropriating it exclusively to her own use, especially as she was imprudent enough to thwart every means which her relations took for that purpose.

About this time, Margarita, who had never seen Dorothea since her arrival in town, met her as she was coming out of St. James's Church, where she had appeared in her own carriage, and dressed in the highest style. Margarita hastened to salute her, saying, "Dear Dorothea, what a pleasure is this! how have I longed to see you!" Dorothea received her salutation with cordiality, and would willingly have persuaded her cousin to get into the carriage and accompany her home; which Margarita declined. She however consented to go with her to the house of a tradesman of Lady Harriet's in Piccadilly, where being shewn into a parlour, Dorothea enquired after her relations, expressed a great wish to see her mother, and engaged her cousin to plead her cause anew; which Margarita readily promised, and as faithfully performed. But before they parted, Margarita ventured to press upon her cousin the necessity of prudence and economy; reminding her how soon fifteen thousand pounds would be gone at their expensive rate of living, and begging her not to squander away her property in an inconsiderate manner.

In reply to this, Dorothea laughed, and said, "I see my little Margarita is the same prudent creature she ever was; but don't fear, my good cousin, we will take care of ourselves." And thus the interview closed; Dorothea having thanked the tradesman for the use of his parlour, and getting into her carriage with all the levity of a girl of fifteen.

It was not many months after this, that Robert Mowbray received a letter from Dorothea, requesting the loan of one hundred pounds, till Captain Freeman should re-

ceive certain remittances from Ireland, of which he had been disappointed. Robert Mowbray was breakfasting with Margarita and Fanny, in Grosvenor Square, when he received the letter; and after reading it, he burst out in a loud laugh; "Faith!" he said; "this is good. Remittances from Ireland! I would not lend sixpence on all the estates possessed by the whole family of the Freemans in that land of potatoes."

"But, perhaps," said Margarita, "you may be induced, by the regard you have for your sister, to give the sum required."

"What to be fooled away at the gambling table? No, no, Dorothea shall have no money of mine for such purposes," said Robert.

"But though Dorothea is careless and extravagant, she never gambles," said Margarita.

"Does she not!" returned Robert, laughing; "where have you been, my little cousin, this last six months?"

"You shock me, Robert," replied Margarita: "can this be true?"

"True as I am alive," said Robert. "It was but last week, that I heard of her winning and losing, at some old dowager's pharo-table, above half of what she now asks me for."

"Then I have no more to say," said Margarita, weeping. "O Dorothea! Dorothea!"

"Come, come, don't shed tears for her, my good girl," said Robert, somewhat softened; "she is not worthy of such kindness. But you see, my fair cousin, you cannot but see, that one might as well throw one's money to the dogs as give it to her."

The young man then calling for pen, ink, and paper, penned in a great hurry a very polite note, saying, that he was himself just now so terribly out at elbows, that he could not command a hundred pounds if his life depended upon it. And having finished his epistle, he threw it across the table to Margarita.

"You have found the best excuse in the world for not lending money," said Margarita, when she had read the note, "if it were but true."

"Why, Margarita," said Robert, laughing, "this is more than the lie insinuated, which every gentleman is bound to bear from a lady—you have actually given me

the lie direct; and you may reasonably suppose that I am wishing that you were a man at this moment, that I might strike you through the heart with this knife." The young man then closed the letter, and sent it off.

Margarita sighed as the footman carried it out of the room, and said, "Dear Robert, don't mention this affair to your mother."

"O, you can call me dear, now," he replied, "when you have a favour to ask: it was not dear Robert a few minutes ago. But, my gentle cousin," he added, "as you never ask favours for yourself, my heart would be harder than a stone if I did not grant you what you now request."

Margarita's care to conceal the guilty imprudences of Dorothea in some degree from Lady Harriet was however fruitless; for Mrs. Dashwood having received the counterpart of her brother's letter, lost no time to impart its contents to her mother, thus hardening that unfortunate parent more and more against her guilty daughter.

It was not many days after this, that Margarita received a request from Dorothea for the loan of a small sum. "I shall be able to repay you," she said in her letter, "within ten days; and should not think of asking you now, but on the ground of a very pressing necessity."

It happened that Margarita had but little money by her at the time, having lately sent a remittance to some of her old pensioners in the country, and also completed the furniture of the two rooms at her cottage in Wales. She however sent all she had, which was fifteen pounds, to which Fanny begged to add two more from her little stock.

From that time for several days Margarita heard no more of her unfortunate cousin; till one morning Mrs. Hill came weeping into her room, saying, "Ah, Miss Margarita, I am told that there is an execution in Captain Freeman's house: and I am sorry to add, that this shocking affair has been reported to my lady."

"By whom?" said Margarita.

"By Mrs. Evans," said Mrs. Hill; "Lady Harriet's own maid."

"What," said Margarita, "can be her motive?"

"To serve those," returned Mrs. Hill, "who would be glad to have poor Mrs. Freeman left out of my lady's will."

"Who are they who can be so base and so self-interested?" asked Margarita.

"They are those," said Mrs. Hill, "who by their extravagances have made a few thousands, more or less, of more consequence to them than their integrity. O! Miss Margarita, you knew not what a favour dear Lady Susan was conferring upon you, when she taught you the need of attention to money affairs: for they only who understand and practise economy, know how to be generous in thought and deed. The extravagant and self-indulgent are always mean, inasmuch as they have a thousand craving wants and imperious necessities ever pressing upon them."

"But poor Dorothea," said Margarita; "what shall I do for her?"

"Do this, my dear young lady," said the respectable and prudent Mrs. Hill; "leave her to suffer at present a few of the consequences of her own imprudence: but endeavour to engage her mother to settle something upon her, which may preserve her and her child from want hereafter. My poor lady cannot live long. Independent of the fatal disease which preys upon her, these dreadful calamities in her family would probably soon put an end to her life. Watch your opportunity, and plead with her in behalf of her afflicted child."

This conversation was interrupted by Mrs. Evans, who came to call Margarita to her aunt. At the sight of Mrs. Hill in the young lady's room, she changed colour, but did not make any remark.

Margarita found Lady Harriet bolstered up in her bed, her face highly flushed, and her eyes sparkling with indignation. She instantly entered upon the subject which pressed most upon her heart; and after several vehement expressions of displeasure against Dorothea and her husband, "Margarita," she said, "I charge you, as you value my future favour, to join with the rest of the family, in renouncing and disowning that miserable young woman."

Margarita did not speak.

"You don't speak, you don't answer me," said Lady Harriet: "I am then to understand that you do not choose to obey me. Do as you like. Please yourself. But observe this, your name shall be blotted from the testament I leave behind me."

"Dear aunt, assure yourself," returned Margarita, "that I will never encourage her in what is amiss."

"You prevaricate," said Lady Harriet: "you refuse to obey. Well, be it so. Evans, you will order my notary to be sent for, I have not long to live: my children have broken my heart, and they may soon rejoice over my grave."

"Nay, my lady, nay," said Mrs. Evans.

"Dear, dear aunt," said Margarita.

"No more! no more!" returned Lady Harriet, waving her hand: "retire, Margarita. I have nourished a serpent in my bosom. I see, I plainly see that you would not now uphold that undutiful daughter, were you not conscious that she owes much of her present misery to yourself."

"To me, Madam!" said Margarita.

"Go, go, leave me," said Lady Harriet, waving her hand again. "Evans, bring me my drops; I am fainting; this is too much." And while she uttered these last words the colour forsook her cheeks, and she became insensible.

Margarita stayed with her aunt till she recovered her recollection, and then withdrew in a state of the utmost depression of spirits. She remained in her own room nearly the whole of the day; and Fanny continued with her, endeavouring to console her. Margarita sent Fanny, from time to time, to enquire after the health of Lady Harriet. Fanny brought back word at one time, that Lady Harriet had fainted again, and that the physician had been sent for; and at another time, that Mrs. Dashwood was with her, and that she was supposed to be considerably worse than the day before.

It was the month of November, and a deep fog, which the rays of the lamps were unable to disperse, hung heavily on the magnificent square in which the family resided. About eight o'clock in the evening a note was brought to Margarita. She opened it in haste: it was from Dorothea, and contained the following words— "Come to me, my only friend, my own Margarita; I am ruined, undone, lost for ever!! My husband is —, but I will tell you by and by; and my poor child, my Alfred, my baby, is dying. Come, I beseech you; bring

a few guineas in your pocket, you may perhaps save my boy. Your miserable Dorothea."

Margarita burst into tears on reading the letter; and putting it into the hand of Mrs. Hill, who had brought it up to her from the hall, "I must go, I must go," she said, "come what will of it, I must go."

"And I will attend you, my dear young lady," said Mrs. Hill.

"No, no, excellent woman, I will not allow it," said the young lady. "No, the fruits of your long and faithful services shall not thus be thrown away. But where am I to get a few guineas? I have not one shilling left."

"But I have," said Fanny; "here are fifteen shillings."

"And you shall have more immediately," said Mrs. Hill, pulling out a long green purse from her pocket, and putting it with its whole contents into Margarita's hand. "But you shall not go alone: one is here, who arrived but a minute ago from the country, who shall attend you; and one who perhaps can protect you better than I can."

"Who is it?" said Margarita.

"It is Edmund," said Mrs. Hill, "who entered the house at the instant I came up."

"Edmund!" said Margarita: "I hope no accident."

"None, none," said Mrs. Hill; "he is employed on some business of Mr. Mowbray's, so don't be uneasy on that head."

"Well, this is fortunate," said Margarita: "I will now walk to the next stand of coaches; let Edmund be ready to accompany me."

"Heaven bless you, my dear young lady, and may you be enabled to give comfort!" said Mrs. Hill, as she went down to prepare Edmund.

Margarita being provided with a bonnet and a large cloak of Mrs. Hill's, set out to walk, taking Edmund's arm, in order to be protected from insult in the street: but you may easily imagine what were the feelings of this delicate young woman, who had been brought up in the highest life, to be thus compelled to go out in a clandestine way so inadequately attended. At the moment she passed the iron gate in front of the house, a travelling carriage drove up to it, and she heard the voice of her cousin Robert, who had just alighted, speaking to another gentleman within the carriage. She held down

her head in order not to be recognized, and drew as much as possible towards the railing, in order to get away without absolutely encountering her cousin. But Robert perceiving some persons coming out of the gates, said, "Whom have we got there? who is it that is passing?"

"It is I, Sir," said Edmund.

"O, you are come, are you! that is well: but where are you going at this hour?" said Robert.

"Not far, Sir," said Edmund.

"And whom have you got with you?" said Robert. Edmund hesitated.

"O, some country cousin whom you have brought to see the town," said Robert, laughing; "but don't lose yourself, man, for I shall want you to-morrow." So saying, he turned towards the carriage, and speaking to one within, "Come, Claverton," he added, "what are you doing there? the servants will take care of the baggage."

Margarita heard no more, for she had hastened forward, not waiting for Edmund; but at the sound of this last name she found herself ready to drop on the pavement.

"O Dorothea! Dorothea!" she said to herself; "what shame and dishonour do you bring on all with whom you are connected! But this is the fruit of extravagance."

Edmund was too well mannered to take any notice of what had passed, when he joined Margarita. A coach was speedily obtained; Margarita got in, and Edmund took his place on the outside; and in less than a quarter of an hour, they found themselves at the place whither they had been directed. The coach stopped at the door of a handsome house, which however had the appearance of being uninhabited, all the shutters being closed, and not a light visible. They rung and knocked for some time without effect; but at length an ill-looking man opened the door, and asked them in a surly voice whom they wanted. "Mrs. Freeman," said Margarita; "does she not live here?"

"Yes," said the man, "she is above; but what do you want with her?"

"I am her relation," said Margarita; "I am come on business."

"Well, go up then," said the man; "but what does this young fellow want with her?"

"He is my servant," said Margarita.

The man eyed Edmund from head to foot, as if he doubted Margarita's assertion ; and then said, "Come in here, young man," and opening the door of a parlour, he exhibited three or four of his comrades, who were sitting round a table covered with jugs and cups.

Edmund went into the room, and Margarita walked up stairs, having had a candle put into her hand by one of the men. The landing-place at the head of the stairs was carpeted, and a handsome lamp hung from the centre of the ceiling. Margarita stood on the landing-place for a moment, listening to the loud laughter of the men below, and half alarmed lest she should have mistaken the house. At length, a low wailing cry reached her ears, followed by a shriek, after which she could distinctly hear the voice of Dorothea, exclaiming, "Oh, my child ! my child ! my baby is dying ! Alfred, look at your poor mother ; do you know me, my boy ? O my Alfred !"

Margarita advanced to the door of the room from whence the voice proceeded, and gently opening it, saw an infant extended on a bed, on one side of which knelt Dorothea, her hair dishevelled, her dress disordered, and her eyes streaming with tears : on the other side of the bed stood a female servant, looking intently on the child, who appeared to be in a strong fit. Margarita advanced, and at sight of her Dorothea sprang up, flew to her, clasped her in her arms, and the next moment fell senseless at her feet. Margarita's attention was for a moment drawn to the fainting mother, and then towards the child, who was evidently in the agonies of a dreadful convulsion. She tried to raise up Dorothea, but could only succeed in lifting her head from the floor ; while her eyes were fixed on the child, who after two or three gasps and struggles lay perfectly still. "Oh, he is dead ! he is dead !" she exclaimed ; "my poor baby is dead !" and burst into an agony of tears, which brought her instant relief. The female servant, who had been the nurse of the child, seemed almost as unable to exert herself as her mistress : she however brought a cup of water to Dorothea, and having put it to her lips, and bathed her forehead, the unhappy young woman began to revive ; and rising up again, ran to the bed, where, wringing her hands, she exclaimed, "Oh, my boy ! my boy ! Margarita, look at

my boy ! judge what he has been ! consider what I have lost ! Oh, my child !” and then stooping down, like one in a frenzy, she pressed her lips on his.

A faint convulsion of the limbs was now observed by Margarita, who said, “ My dear cousin, the baby is not dead : have you had no advice ? have you no physician ? ”

“ I have neither money nor credit,” said Dorothea, “ and I am here in prison : did you not see who was below ? ”

“ I did,” said Margarita ; “ but they have no right to detain you : we will however talk of this another time. I have brought money, and will send for instant help.” So saying, she ran to the head of the stairs, and calling Edmund, sent for the nearest medical assistant.

While Edmund was absent, the child revived a little ; but such were the feelings of those about him, that no word was spoken but what related to him : and all the while the agony of the mother was such as would not allow her to answer any question ; but continually wringing her hands and sobbing, she called upon her infant, who was entirely insensible to all her cries.

Edmund soon returned, and with him a surgeon. At sight of him, Dorothea revived a little. The first thing the surgeon did, was to order one of the windows to be opened : but while they were attempting to do this, the men below sent up word that they would not allow it. The surgeon returned for answer, that they had no right to prevent it. They answered, that they had a right, and that they would not allow it.

“ Well,” said the surgeon, “ we must give up the point, since we have no time to lose in disputing : but it is a cruel case, if this infant is to be deprived of that which even the poorest beggar may enjoy, the pure air of heaven.”

Dorothea looked at Margarita ; it was a look full of meaning, but no remark was made. The surgeon then put many questions to the nurse, and finding that the child had only ailed a very little the day before, and had been in a dangerous way only for a few hours, he took out his lancet and bled him, which seemed to afford immediate relief, as the infant opened his eyes, and breathed more freely. He then lanced his gums ; observing to the mother, that his teeth were probably the cause of his

fits: to which he added, that a mother should be very careful to watch the state of an infant's mouth.

Dorothea had lately been called to other employment than that of attending to the wants of her child.

It was astonishing what relief the poor infant seemed to experience from these two operations: his limbs, which had been burning with fever, were now covered with a gentle perspiration; and the surgeon having caused something to be given him to drink, he seemed inclined to sleep.

The surgeon then took his leave, promising to send some medicine. Margarita followed him out upon the landing-place, to offer him a fee: but he declined it, saying, "No, young lady, when I have performed the cure, I shall look for my reward, but not till then. Let the child be kept quiet—I shall come again to-morrow."

As soon as the surgeon was gone, and Margarita had returned to the room, Dorothea again embraced and thanked her for her kindness with floods of tears.

"But why, my dear Dorothea, did you delay so long? why did you not send sooner for assistance?" said Margarita.

"Because," said Dorothea, renewing her tears, "I was destitute of money."

"Nay," said Margarita, "but why not sell the very clothes off your back for the sake of your child?"

"I was afraid of stirring; I was afraid of taking any step, Margarita; you do not know half the horrors of my situation," replied Mrs. Freeman.

"I think I do," said Margarita.

"No, no, you do not," returned Dorothea. She then directed the servant to go out and stand in the passage, and observe that there were no listeners; when, lowering her voice, she said, "Margarita, there are many writs out against my husband; and the men who are below are empowered to seize him and commit him to prison, if he can be discovered. There is something in the case which I myself do not understand: but he is concealed in this house, and those who are below are, I suspect, aware of the circumstance. They have hitherto however refrained from such close search as might enable them to find him: but if I were to stir from hence, they would be no longer restrained."

Margarita shuddered. "What do you propose to do? this cannot go on long," said she.

"I know not," said Dorothea: "fortune may favour him, he is continually watching his opportunity."

Margarita was silent. She knew not what to say: she knew not what would be right to say. She fixed her eyes on the sleeping infant, and could not help secretly wishing that he might rather die in his present state of comparative innocence than be brought up amid scenes of horror and confusion like those she now witnessed.

For a few moments all was silent, and nothing was heard excepting occasional bursts of laughter from the parlour below.

At length, a single loud knock was heard at the street-door. "That is the man, I hope, with the medicine," said Margarita.

The door was presently opened, and at the same moment followed a kind of noise in the hall as of one running swiftly. This was instantly succeeded by a loud and tremendous rush of voices and shouts, intermingled with oaths and imprecations.

"Blessed heaven! what can that be?" exclaimed Dorothea.

The noise continued, but appeared to be removed to the street; where the report of a pistol was mingled with the sound of human voices.

Margarita, and Dorothea, and the maid-servant, ran half way down the stairs; they perceived the street-door open, but saw no one: the cries from the street became more faint, as they were more distant. At the same instant the screams of the infant above stairs, being just roused from his balmy and healing slumber, reached the ears of its terrified friends; who, quickly returning, found him stretched on his back, while he uttered the most terrific shrieks.

For a few minutes Margarita heard nothing but the soul-harrowing shrieks of the child. When at length she recovered herself, she found Edmund standing in the room. Dorothea had fainted again, and the nurse was in such a state as rendered her unable to give the slightest assistance. "O! Edmund! Edmund!" said Margarita, "can you give no help? you are a father yourself: can you think of nothing to be done?"

Edmund lifted the child from the bed, carried him about the room in his arms, spoke to him tenderly, and requested that some one would go down and look for the medicine which had been delivered in at the moment of the uproar.

Margarita instantly ran down, and found the bottle thrown on a chair in the hall, the door of which was still wide open: she was going to shut the door and lock it, when a man whom she had not seen before, and who was just standing without in the street, stepped in between her and the door, saying, "Not so fast, young lady, if you please, not so fast. You are a deep one, I see, in spite of your smooth face. However, justice will have its due after all."

"I don't know what you mean," said Margarita.

"O, you don't?" said the man. "But, however, I trust the gentleman will be caught, and then we shall see how things will go." The man then added two or three sentences in a jargon which the young lady could not understand, but with an insolence of manner which made her glad to run back to her friends.

After the infant had received the medicine, it presently appeared more composed, but renewed its cries whenever Edmund attempted to lay it down.

Dorothea had revived while Margarita was below; but the moment she opened her eyes, she renewed her tears. "Oh! the horrors of this night!" she said; ——"the complicated horrors of this night! What was the occasion, Edmund, of that dreadful noise below?"

"Because, Madam," said Edmund; "at the moment the door was opened to the surgeon's apprentice, a man rushed by and ran out into the street,"

"And who opened the door?" said Dorothea.

"I did, Madam," said Edmund. "But the men were watching me from the parlour door."

"And did you favour the escape of the man who rushed by you?" said Dorothea.

"I used no means to detain him," said Edmund, smiling.

"I thought I would give all sides fair play."

"And do you think they will overtake him?" said Dorothea.

"I cannot tell," said Edmund: "but he shot like an

row from a bow. Yet I heard a pistol go off at the bottom of the street."

"Well," said Dorothea, sighing bitterly, "I wish he may escape; and if it pleases God to spare me my boy, I shall contentedly retire to some solitude, and there endeavour to make up for my follies by a life of deep repentance."

Margarita could have pointed out to her that some other atonement was required for the sins of man than mere repentance, even were repentance in a man's own power: but there are seasons in which the mind is too highly wrought upon to receive new ideas, and therefore she judged it best to be silent.

The baby was now become perfectly silent, excepting that now and then a deep sigh would escape its gentle breast. The rest of the party also were silent; Dorothea continuing at times to weep violently.

At length some of the men returned. They came in grumbling and cursing: but it appeared from what they uttered as they passed through the hall, that they had nothing more than their labour for their pains, having entirely lost sight of the person whom they were pursuing.

The clock of a neighbouring church struck two immediately after the return of these men. Margarita started at the sound, and began to consider her own situation.—"I cannot return at this hour to Grosvenor Square," she thought; "neither can I leave poor Dorothea in this condition. Nevertheless, I am liable to forfeit every friend I have in the world by what I have done to-night; and yet I could have done no otherwise."

It was three o'clock before the house was perfectly quiet; but by this time the men had fallen asleep in their chairs, having comforted themselves with this reflection:—"If the captain has made a clean escape, it will not be our loss, but that of our employers. If they lose their dues, we cannot help it; *we* must be paid *whether or no.*"

"My dear Dorothea," said Margarita, seeing her cousin somewhat more composed, "now your husband is safe, as I trust he is, you must get your affairs settled and remove out of this house."

Dorothea began to weep. "When I leave this house, where can I go?" she asked. "O that my mother would receive me!"

Margarita gave her no hope of this kind, but assured her that she would do all in her power to promote her interest.

"Then if I cannot be with my mother," said Dorothea, "I should wish for the deepest retirement."

"Then, Madam," said Edmund, who was quietly stepping backwards and forwards through the large and elegant apartment with the baby softly cradled in his arms, "there are two as pretty rooms in our house as can be found in any cottage in the world, and such a fair grove on one side, and a garden on the other, with a murmuring brook running through this last, as, in my mind, is hardly any where to be equalled. And my excellent young lady there," he added, bowing to Margarita as he spoke, "has lately furnished them so prettily and genteelly, that, if you did not esteem such a poor place below your notice, I think you might be very comfortable with us, and we should be most proud to do you service: and little master (if the Lord spare him) would have plenty of room wherein to play and amuse himself." Edmund reddened up to the eyes when he had made this speech, fearing lest it should not be well taken. *But it was well taken.* For this proof of affection to the distressed Dorothea, seemed to call out all that was amiable in her nature; and bursting into tears, she said, "Thank you, Edmund. I will think of your plan, and will adopt it, if," added she, with a sigh, "my mother will not see me." Then turning to her cousin, she added, "This is indeed a glorious triumph of *The Economy of Charity.*"

Margarita could make no reply: but bursting into tears, she fell on the neck of her cousin; who, pressing her closely in her arms, said, "Give me your heart, my sister, and I shall no longer be poor."

When I look back upon the sheets which I have devoted to this little history, I feel the necessity of bringing the remaining events which I have to relate, into a somewhat narrower compass. With this view I shall shortly tell you, that Margarita remained with Dorothea till the morning, and that she then returned to Grosvenor Square. She there learned that Lady Harriet had been much worse, and that her son and Mrs. Dashwood had been there all night; that Augustus Claverton had sup-

ped in Grosvenor Square, but had left it after supper, and proposed to proceed in the morning to Lord G—'s. Fanny told her that he had enquired after her; and that Mrs. Dashwood had informed him that Margarita was gone from home, having set out on foot attended only by Edmund, in order to spend the evening with Captain and Mrs. Freeman—upon which Robert, laughing heartily, had said, “O! that accounts then for Edmund's reserve when I asked who was with him.”

“And what did Augustus Claverton say to all this, Fanny?” said Margarita.

“Why, he did as you do now,” replied Fanny; “he looked excessively cross.”

“Do I look cross?” said Margarita, trying to smile.

“Yes, you do,” said Fanny; “and tired too, and very sorrowful; but I do not wonder at it.”

“And did Mr. Claverton say he should return again to Grosvenor Square before he left England?” said Margarita.

“No,” replied Fanny; “for he wished to see mamma, because he feared he should not see her again.”

Margarita only saw Dorothea once again after the evening above mentioned. When her husband's affairs came to be looked into, it was found there was scarcely enough left to pay her journey into Wales; though there were some large sums which could never be accounted for, and which, it was afterwards supposed, the captain had secreted for his own private purposes, as he was some years after his escape heard of on the Continent enjoying himself at taverns and *caffes*, which it is well known cannot be done without money. Dorothea seemed however to be brought to such a sense of her misconduct as to feel an earnest desire to submit to her circumstances with the humblest resignation: in consequence of which, she dismissed her only remaining London servant, and, when arrived in Wales, accepted the services of a poor country girl.

Lady Harriet died almost immediately after the departure of her daughter from town; and it was found, when her will came to be examined, that she had not only omitted the name of her unfortunate daughter, but also that of her niece.

Margarita had made many attempts, at different times,

to plead her cousin's cause with Lady Harriet; and good Mrs. Hill had done the same, but with equal ill success. Poor Dorothea was in consequence left pennyless. Mrs. Hill had indeed reason to think that Lady Harriet deeply regretted this severity some short time before her death, but when it was too late for her to alter her will. For she said to Mrs. Hill, who sat up with her the last night, "Poor Dorothea! I hope, Hill, that Robert and Jane will take care of her; and Margarita—dear Margarita, will be kind to her. Margarita is a good girl, and if she wishes Fanny to be with her when I am no more, I hope no one will oppose it." Mrs. Hill also overheard her speaking much to the same purpose to Mrs. Dashwood.

By Lady Harriet's orders the establishment in Grosvenor Square was not to be broken up till three months after her death; during which time, Margarita remained there with Fanny and good Mrs. Hill.

In the mean time, Margarita, whose own property was not less than twelve thousand pounds, into full possession of which she was to come in less than a year, had made up her mind to reside in Wales with her cousin. And to this effect she had written to Dorothea, informing her that she was coming in the spring, and desiring that a small room, which Edmund had informed her could be spared, might be neatly fitted up for her use; adding her intention, that her dear cousin should be the sharer of her property and all her comforts. "For," said she, "my beloved Dorothea, it will be impossible for me ever to repay the care and attention your dear mother bestowed on me in the helpless days of my infancy."

These repeated kindnesses of Margarita seemed, with the divine blessing, so entirely to subdue the proud spirit of Dorothea, that she wrote her back a letter, dictated under a deep sense of her own unworthiness, and replete with expressions of tenderness.

Dorothea, you may be well assured, set herself to make preparations with the utmost alacrity for her dear cousin; and very prettily, though properly, herself took possession of the smaller room, leaving the larger for the lady of the mansion. Nor was Dorothea the only happy person on this occasion; for who could be more pleased than Edmund and Rachel? or who could bustle about

more than old Martha Lawley, to get things ready as the time drew near?

"But where," said Mrs. Hill, when informed of Margarita's plan, "where, my dear young lady, will you find a bed for your servant?"

"O, my good Mrs. Hill," said Margarita, "I shall not take one from London; I must get some little Welsh damsel to wait upon me, and she may find some corner to sleep in."

"No, no, my dear Miss Margarita," said Mrs. Hill, "a Welsh damsel will not do for you. Will you accept my services? I have known you ever since you were four years old, and Miss Fanny ever since she was born, and I cannot leave you."

The tears came into Margarita's eyes when she heard this declaration; and thanking Mrs. Hill, she gladly accepted her offer, expressing only a fear that she might not be able to make her comfortable.

"Never fear, my dear young lady," said Mrs. Hill: "I shall be very comfortable, if they will give me but a corner of a clean kitchen, and a clean bed to myself; and truly I think it would be more prudent for so young a lady as yourself to travel about with an elderly and careful servant."

When every thing was arranged, a letter was written to announce the speedy arrival of the little party.

In the mean time, Augustus Claverton, who had been for some time at the houses of the Earl of G——, and of other friends in England, and had taken a hasty trip to Paris, was now returning to Ireland; but hearing of the distresses of his cousin Dorothea, he turned a little out of his road to visit her, and to press upon her such pecuniary aid as he felt she must stand in need of.

Dorothea was touched and gratified by his kindness, though she wished to decline his assistance. "Indeed, my dear cousin," she said, "I do not want it, for I am amply supplied, and from a quarter you would not suspect." She then took occasion, in a manner most warm and generous, to vindicate the character of Margarita, to confess all her former injustice to her, and to enumerate all that Margarita had sacrificed and undergone for her service.

"I once," she added, "despised that spirit of economy

and self-denial, which she has always exhibited : I often ridiculed it, I scorned to imitate it, I held it up as mean and degrading. But I now see its beauty, and bless the principle from whence it sprung, while I and my child are actually indebted to it, under heaven, for all the peace and happiness we enjoy."

Augustus seemed to be deeply affected by this panegyric on Margarita : his cheek flushed high, his eyes sparkled, he took the hand of Dorothea, and having uttered some encomiums on the unenvious generosity of her present sentiments, he added, " Lovely Margarita, how have I wronged her by my injurious suspicions ! Would to heaven that she could extend her charity to me ; that she could forgive—I would say more—that she could love me, and become the guide and companion of life ! "

On hearing this, Dorothea melted into tears. Mr. Claverton turned upon her a penetrating glance which she well understood.

" Do not mistake me, Augustus," she said ; " these tears are tears of joy ; nothing now could have inspired me with delight equal to this. My ambition for myself is gone ; young as I am, the world has lost its charms for me. To live in this place with my boy, to see him healthy and happy, and to bring him up in the fear of God, is all I now can look forward to with any desire. Be assured, these are my present feelings ; and I pray that I never more may be drawn into the world, nor ever prove again its dangerous delusions."

Augustus took her hand : he seemed affected. " May heaven spare your child to you, and bless him," said the young man ; " and henceforward consider me as your brother, and in consequence entitled to patronize your son." So saying, he put a bank-note of a hundred pounds into her hands, as he said, for the use of the child. Augustus Claverton stayed with his cousin till it was getting dark ; when he arose and left her, saying that he should sleep at a small inn in the village, and call upon her again in the morning.

" And you will not leave us to-morrow," said Dorothea ; " for perhaps our friends may be with us in the evening."

" What," said Augustus, " so soon ? I did not understand that they were expected so soon."

The next day rose with all the blooming charms of early spring: the tender leaves were just springing forth in the cottage garden, the lambs were bleating in the adjoining fields, the modest violet and pale primrose shed their odours through the balmy air, and a little rivulet rushed down a bed of rock in the neighbouring wood, just within view of the parlour window; while Dorothea's little boy, now more than two years of age, seemed to partake of the renovating influence of this delightful season, being all gay and blooming, and crowing with delight as Augustus Claverton entered the simple abode of his once lively cousin. The little table was spread by the neat handed Rachel, with simple but excellent viands from her dairy and farm-yard; a few spring flowers being their only garnish.

“Dorothea,” said Augustus, “I doubt whether the great understand true taste when they banish the simple works of nature so far from their houses, and substitute in their stead the artificial lake and formal shrubbery. What beauties in any place laid out by art, can equal the wild wood, the rushing waterfall, and shadowy dingle, seen from this window? It is much to learn, that beauty, elegance, and happiness, are entirely distinct from pomp, and show, and splendour: highly favoured are those who learn this lesson without passing through the severe school of adversity; but still they may consider themselves as blessed, who learn it at any rate. The emptiness of the pomps and vanities of this world, is a secret which some never can discover, till compelled to renounce them on the bed of death.”

The young man then entered upon the subject of religion, and said many things which appeared to be entirely new to Dorothea; but which, with the divine blessing, she was prepared to receive in a manner that gave her cousin inexpressible pleasure.

“I shall be lingering about this place all day,” said Mr. Claverton. “After breakfast I am going to look at my friend Edmund's farm; and shall trespass upon you for a dinner.” So saying, he walked out, and was presently seen exploring the dingle, the cascade, the pasture, and the farm-yard, with his old acquaintance of Mowbray-hall. Before dinner, which was fixed at an early hour, he appeared again, and sitting down by Do-

rothea who was employed with her needle, he talked to her of the beauties of the situation, the kindness and good manners of Edmund, and the superior appearance of Rachel. "But you must feel the want of books in this place; books are absolutely necessary in this solitude, and a musical instrument scarcely less so; and I should advise you, my dear cousin, to confine yourself in a good measure to that line of reading, which may enable you so far to carry on your son's education, as to keep him with you a few years longer than would otherwise be proper."

"You set before me a very constraining motive to exertion," said Dorothea.

After dinner, Augustus proposed that they should walk to the end of the valley, whence a fine view was commanded of the London road for some miles. But when they had attained this height, and lingered upon it for some time without any carriage coming in view, they returned to the cottage; where they found the tea-table neatly and even elegantly arranged, all the family appearing in a state of preparation for their expected friends. Augustus and Dorothea sat down again, and were busily engaged in talking of the dear travelling party, when suddenly the sound of the village-bells ringing a merry peal reached their ears.

"Hark!" said Augustus; "it is so. This is a plan of Edmund's, the carriage is now in the village, you may be sure, and will be here in a few moments." So saying, he snatched up the blooming little Alfred, who was sitting on the sofa by his mother, and was the first of the family, who all came pouring out on the little green, (being warned by the bells,) to receive the friends so dearly loved. For a moment they all stood grouped before the cottage door, whose porch and gothic windows adorned with eglantine afforded no tasteless back-ground to the scene. Augustus stood foremost without a hat, his fine face glowing with unmixed delight, and in his arms he held the cherub Alfred; near to Augustus was the elegant Dorothea, weeping with mingled emotions, among which those of love and gratitude were predominant; at a respectful distance on the other side of the green were Martha and Rachel, the latter holding a fine ruddy infant in her arms; Edmund stood ready to open the gate; while crowded

in the passage at the door of the house appeared two bare-armed Welsh damsels, and an old labourer, poking out their faces with a vacant stare to catch all that was to be seen.

Such was the scene which presented itself to the travellers as they drove up to the cottage-gate: and I ask my young reader, if the joy of such a moment was not sufficient to repay the amiable Margarita for that long series of self-denial by which, through the divine favour, she had acquired some sort of claim to so rare a happiness?

And now, inasmuch as I despair of depicting with any accuracy the circumstances which followed this happy meeting, I shall simply satisfy myself, and I trust my readers, by shortly summing up the events to which they led the way, and by giving a slight historic account of the several persons with whom I have made them acquainted during the course of my narrative.

The village bells rang again as merrily as ever not many weeks after the arrival of Margarita, and she again provided the occasion.—It was on that happy day when Augustus Claverton secured to himself a powerful assistant in his honourable and pious plans for benefiting his poor tenants and dependents in Ireland.

Augustus made an offer of the superintendence of his household to the excellent Mrs. Hill: but she declined with tears of gratitude the honour he intended her, confessing her wish to remain in Wales for the purpose of administering consolation to Mrs. Freeman.

“If so,” said Augustus, “you shall receive the same salary as you would have received in my house; and if you are enabled to administer to the consolation of our dear Dorothea, we shall always consider the obligation as being on our side.”

This arrangement was particularly consolatory to Dorothea. Fanny chose to follow the fortunes of Margarita.

The noble young pair on their wedding-day presented to Dorothea a paper by which £400 a year was secured to her for life, to be paid quarterly; Rachel and Edmund were presented with another paper, by which they found that the rent which they paid was to be laid up for the use of their children. Margarita also gave five guineas

to Martha Lawley, and sent the same to Mrs. Green at Mowbray-hall.—Augustus also presented to Dorothea an elegant piano-forte together with a case of books.

The happy pair then proceeded to Ireland, where, residing in a noble old mansion coeval with the mighty oaks which shaded its beautiful environs, they found an inexhaustible supply of the means of doing good, in the practice of that Christian self-denial which faith alone can render at once consistent and delightful.

Fanny remained with Margarita till her marriage with a pious and well-educated young clergyman, whom Augustus had presented to a living in the immediate neighbourhood of Claverton-castle.

Of Robert Mowbray, Jane, and Celia, I have little to say, excepting that they were always distressed for money; and that Robert Mowbray was at last compelled to repair his ruined finances by marrying a woman of double his own age, and one who was otherwise not desirable.

And now, my dear young people, if I have succeeded in setting forth *The Economy of Charity* in such a form as may render it a desirable attainment in your eyes, my labour is not lost, and my reward will be such as I would not exchange for “all the pomps and vanities of this wicked world.”

The lady of the manor having concluded her narrative, requested that the young people would join her in prayer; remarking that the evening was far spent.

*Second Prayer for Power to resist the Love of the Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World.*

“BLESSED LORD GOD, we, thy poor and sinful creatures, humbly implore thee to impart to us such a portion of thy grace, as may enable us to resist those vain desires by which so many of our sex make shipwreck of their happiness upon earth, utterly destroying the comfort and peace of their families. We daily see before us instances of this kind, and we have no reason to think that we shall be more prudent and stedfast in resisting the temptations common to our nature than the rest of our fellow-creatures—on the contrary, we know ourselves to be weak and miserable creatures, and, unless divinely

upheld, liable to fall every moment. Temptations from within and temptations from without are continually assailing us. Nevertheless, we desire to maintain a becoming confidence in thee, *knowing that he that is with us is greater than he that is against us.* Enable us, O Lord, to walk steadily through the trials of this life ; turn away our eyes from beholding vanity ; set the glory of heaven perpetually before us ; and teach us so to use the unrighteous mammon that we may not be brought to shame thereby, as the unwise servant, who slothfully hid his talent in a napkin. And, O Almighty Father, if through grace we are assisted to use that which thou hast given us to thy service, make us constantly to remember that we are still but unprofitable servants, that our best works are but as filthy rags, and that unless divested of these and clad in the righteousness of Christ, *we shall be cast out into outer darkness, where the worm never dieth and the fire is not quenched.* And now, O blessed Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in whom is our only confidence, we cast our cares upon thee, anxious in every concern of our lives to be directed by thy counsels, and guided by thy providence : so that whether riches or poverty be our portion, our single desire may be, while we live to live unto the Lord, and when we die to die unto the Lord. Hear us, O merciful Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ our only Lord and Saviour, in whose blessed words we conclude our petitions.

“Our Father,” &c.

## CHAPTER VII.

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*All the sinful Lusts of the Flesh.*

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IT was a fine evening in the month of April when the little party again met at the manor-house. The days were now considerably lengthened, and they sat before the windows to take their tea and to converse on indifferent subjects while they enjoyed their repast, being regaled at the same time with the glorious prospect of the last rays of the departing sun, as it descended behind the dark groves which crowned the neighbouring heights.

When the tea-equipage was removed, the lady of the manor immediately applied to the business upon which they were assembled; and addressing herself to Miss Sophia, she said, "What, my dear young lady, is to be the subject of our conversation this evening?"

Miss Sophia replied, "We were speaking in our last conversation of 'the pomps and vanities of this wicked world'; and we are now to proceed to 'the sinful lusts of the flesh.'"

The lady of the manor then asked the young people what they understood by these words.—"What," said she, "are the sinful lusts of the flesh?"

The young ladies looked at each other. At length, Miss Louisa replied, "The sinful lusts of the flesh, are those kind of evil desires to which wicked people give way, when they yield to intoxication, gluttony, and other gross vices."

"Am I to understand by this," said the lady of the manor, "that these lusts of the flesh are unknown to any but gross sinners? and that you, my young people, have no desires or wishes which are not entirely conformable to the will of God?"

“ O Madam,” said Miss Louisa, “ I did not mean to insinuate any such thing.”

“ Beware then, my dear young lady,” returned her pious instructress, “ how you confound the root of sin with its branches and fruit. In an unregenerate state the whole race of mankind are alike subject to the secret workings of sin in the heart. And although, in some cases, circumstances may prevent the full growth of the branches, yet let it be remembered that the poisonous nature is the same in the sapling as in the full-grown tree, and that there is as deadly a nature in the germ and bud as in the ripe and luscious fruit ; which leads me to a reconsideration of that important doctrine which I have already brought to your notice on several former occasions.

“ The sin that dwelleth in man is called inbred or original sin : it is that corrupt frame which inclines man to evil continually.

“ It is thus spoken of in the Ninth Article of the Church. ‘ Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk,) but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that is naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit, and therefore in every person born into this world it deserveth God’s wrath and damnation. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated : whereby the lust of the flesh, called in Greek, *phronema sarkos*, which some do expound the wisdom, some the affection, some the desire of the flesh —is not subject to the law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the apostle doth confess, that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin.’

“ From this Article as well as from the general tendency of Scripture it appears,” continued the lady of the manor, “ that sin is a disagreement or nonconformity of the will of any creature with the will of God. Consequently, when we desire any thing, however small, however seemingly unimportant, contrary to the declared will and pleasure of God, we indulge a sinful lust of the flesh.

“ Any person therefore who in lesser matters is habitually discontented, and continually desiring that which

God has not given him, is as great an offender in this point, though not so scandalously in the eyes of the world, as that man who indulges himself in any kind of gross intemperance."

The young ladies looking as if they did not comprehend this subject fully, the lady of the manor thus proceeded—"Great mistakes arise, my dear young people, in judging of our own characters, from making comparisons between ourselves and others who, in their different stations, have perhaps not been subjected to those restraints by which we have been preserved from flagrant breaches of the law.

"The sins of young women in respectable life, while under the care of parents, are, generally speaking, not of the flagrant and very gross kind which break out among those of the lower classes; though they nevertheless separate them as entirely from that God, *who is of purer eyes than to behold evil.*" (Hab. i. 13.)

Miss Emmeline said, she hoped the lady of the manor would excuse her, if she asked her to explain what she supposed might be the frequent state of mind of young ladies in decent families, and the particular faults into which she imagined them most liable to fall.

"You of course mean those young people who have not experienced a saving change of character?"

Miss Emmeline answered, that she did.

The lady of the manor then replied, "Even in those who we have reason to hope are truly converted to God, the power of indwelling sin is so strong as frequently to render their lives extremely unhappy.—St. Paul thus describes his own feelings and experience on this point. '*For I know*,' says the apostle, '*that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.* *For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.* *Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* *I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.* *For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*' (Rom. vii. 18—23.)

"But the greater part of young ladies in England," continued the lady of the manor, "even the daughters of religious families, give no evidence of being converted, and are, I fear, only kept from open and flagrant offences by motives of worldly prudence, family restraint, custom, and shame. I hope, or rather I wish, that in making this assertion I may have judged harshly; but, without censuring any individual, I must give you the result of my own experience, while I proceed to tell you what I have reason to think is the general state of young female minds in the middle and higher classes of life.

"Education, though now much attended to in some particulars, very generally overlooks that one point which I should conceive ought to be the basis of all education; and indeed, without a proper attention to which, all else that we can do, humanly speaking, must prove utterly ineffectual."

The young people requested their kind instructress to explain this point: to which she replied—"The Almighty, in his dealings with us, when in his infinite mercy he would call a poor sinner from death unto life, begins, for the most part, by humbling the individual to the very dust, breaking down his proud spirit, and emptying him of self, shewing him his own total helplessness, together with his entire dependence on Christ alone. Neither is any spiritual comfort administered to the poor sinner till this preparatory work is effectually accomplished. In like manner, the parent who stands in the place of God to his infant offspring, and who may reasonably expect the blessing of the Almighty upon his pious endeavours, must begin the great work of education by endeavouring to lower the natural pride of his little pupils.

"This may be done in many cases without harshness; but whether harshness be requisite or not, this point must be laboured; and whatever station the child may occupy, humility must be enforced, and enforced upon Christian principles. All education, however otherwise excellent, which fails in this point, has in my opinion a pernicious tendency; and, humanly speaking, can only produce, at the best, a species of worldly morality, or a mere profession of religion. It was of such characters that we find our Lord speaking with the greatest severity,

and even asserting that publicans and harlots should be admitted into the kingdom of heaven before them. (*Matt. xxi. 31.*)

“ But it appears, that habits of self-denial no further make a part of the child’s education, than (as I before said) worldly prudence may require. Children are not taught to consider, that every thing they possess or enjoy is more than they deserve; and that were they dealt with according to their merits, their portion would be endless misery.

“ Hence when they grow up—wanting true humility, they consider themselves entitled to many pleasures and distinctions, which they never can enjoy, because their inordinate desires have overstepped the boundaries of their actual possessions and privileges. Home and domestic employments become insipid to them, as falling far short of those airy schemes of happiness which they are in the habit of forming. All improvement ceases; and their will, instead of being submitted to that of God, is continually rising in opposition to his in eager cravings after that which he has thought fit to deny them. These strong desires, though exercised on things in themselves lawful, do nevertheless become sinful when the Almighty is pleased to deny us what we require, as we may learn from many passages of Scripture. It is not unlawful to eat flesh, as we well know; but when the Children of Israel required it in the wilderness, this thing was laid to their charge as a grievous sin. We may therefore rest assured, that whenever we desire what our heavenly Father puts out of our reach, we then commit sin, and may be said to indulge the lusts of the flesh.

“ Now,” added the lady of the manor, “ I have reason to think that in this point, that is, in the want of control over their thoughts and desires, young women are often peculiarly faulty; and that this fault being a secret one, they very frequently indulge themselves in it to a great excess, without being brought to a sense of the extreme depravity from which it flows.”

Here one of the young ladies, who had been very attentive to this evening’s discourse, remarked, “ that she had always thought it impossible to govern her thoughts, and that she supposed as long as she kept from actual

sin, she could not be blamed for any thing that passed in her mind."

" My dear young friend," answered the lady of the manor, " evil thoughts are one of the strongest marks of the depravity of human nature; nevertheless, such is the power of our natural corruption, that even after conversion evil thoughts continually present themselves. But the Christian knows where he may find help to overcome them; and our heavenly Father has promised that no temptation shall assail us but such as we shall be enabled to resist, and that he will with the temptation make us a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it. (1 Cor. x. 13.) Therefore no excuse can be made for those who deliberately entertain evil thoughts, since the Holy Spirit stands engaged to furnish us with sufficient assistance to overcome this and every other kind of temptation: but, for the most part, young persons neither avail themselves of the assistance offered them by the Holy Spirit, nor even use the common external means of overcoming this sin. It is very certain that sin can never be mortified nor its influence overcome by any thing short of the divine power of the Holy Spirit, which must therefore be sought by frequent and diligent prayer, as well as by pleading the merits and death of Christ: but our own efforts, although in themselves powerless, must accompany our prayers, while every appointed means must be used for overcoming this plague of the heart, disorderly thoughts."

" We should be much obliged to you, Madam," said Miss Emmeline, " if you could lay down any rules which might assist us in properly regulating our minds; since we cannot look within, without observing there a great many things which may justly be termed extremely wicked."

" You will, my dear Miss Emmeline," replied the lady of the manor, " I trust, bear this in mind: that whatever your exertions may be, you must supplicate the divine blessing upon them. And should you be favoured with success in your endeavours, never forget to give *all* the glory to God. Having made this observation, I will without hesitation lay before you the rules which I have myself found particularly useful in overcoming this fault.

" In the first place, to a person who has habitually given way to evil thoughts, I do not in general recommend

much solitude. To a mind in a tolerably healthy state, solitude is often sweet and profitable, but not to a mind diseased in the way of which we are speaking. Any employment which occupies the hands and not the head is on that very account less eligible for persons in this state: and therefore if needle-work is to be done, I would advise you always at the same time to be repeating or singing hymns, or learning something profitable by heart. Avoid all books and persons which give false views of life, and represent its happiness as proceeding from outward circumstances, or depending upon certain external relations of life, such as husbands, wives, children, possessions, honours, beauty, &c. because these things have no necessary connexion with happiness, and only add to it or detract from it in the degree that the blessing of God accompanies or is withheld from them.

“ Works of imagination in general are dangerous to persons whose minds are in the state of which we are speaking, particularly such as treat on the subjects of love, beauty, pleasure, and matters of this kind. Such subjects should in general be avoided by young people. Of public amusements I hardly think it necessary to speak, because I consider them all decidedly wrong, very dangerous to young people of every description, and quite out of the question for persons of a more mature age. Such employments as strongly exercise the mind and fatigue the body, having some reasonable end in view, are what I should particularly recommend to persons troubled with evil and discontented thoughts—such, for instance, as the care of children, whether of the poor or of those in higher life; the acquirement of difficult languages, such as the Greek and Hebrew, whereby the student is led to the contemplation of the Scriptures in the original; the study of history; reading, praying with, and instructing the sick: all such employments pursued with earnestness, even to fatigue, would prove a great assistance in bringing the thoughts into a good train.

“ The minds of young people in general are active; and those of young females will not be satisfied by the trifling employments in which they are generally engaged, and which from their excessive insipidity frequently drive them to find out for themselves pursuits of a more interesting nature. Hence they are led to look for hap-

piness in a partial indulgence of evil passions, of which increasing misery is the inevitable consequence."

The young ladies, on hearing these remarks, looked as if some new light had broken in upon them. Indeed the discourse to which they had been listening was of so novel a character to them, that they could not comprehend its exact tendency; which the lady of the manor perceiving, said, "My dear young people, in order to give you a better idea of the subject on which we have been to-day conversing, viz. what I think ought to be the state of mind and the private thoughts of a young person, I shall read you a little narrative which I met with some time ago in manuscript. But before I begin this story, I have one or two desultory remarks to make, or rather cautions to give you.

"In general, my dear young friends, all confidential discourse with persons of your own age is to be avoided. If you must have a confidant, a mother or aunt is the properest person. But if such do not offer, you have a Friend on high, a faithful and all-wise Friend, who has both wisdom to counsel and power to protect you. Generally speaking, be in the habit of consulting your fellow-creatures less, and your Maker more. The confidential interviews of young persons are generally filled up with disclosures of things which ought never to be mentioned, and discourses upon subjects which greatly tend to the increase of improper feelings.

"Another caution I would give you, is, to avoid as much as possible those situations in which you are obliged to change your companions at the hour of rest; and likewise to lay aside the too common custom of spending half the hours devoted to rest in conversation with your bedfellows. I consider the silent hours of the night, when all about us is still, as especially belonging to God, and which are particularly calculated, if properly used, for the advancement of the soul in its heavenly course. Be jealous therefore and watchful over yourselves at these seasons; and let them all be seriously devoted to your God. Take the advice of the royal Psalmist in this respect, who says, *Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.* (Psalm iv. 4.)

"I have often thought," continued the lady of the

manor, “what an amazing progress every Christian might make in the way of godliness, if he would but rightly employ these silent and solemn hours ; if he would then labour (with the divine help) to bring his mind into that state, in which he would wish to be found when he shall be required to stand in the presence of his Maker, there to give an account of the deeds done in the body.

“ How often,” added the lady of the manor, “ do we complain of not having time to engage in the duties of prayer and meditation : when, if we would make the best of even those intervals, which the most busy life affords as well as the most calm, it is astonishing how much might be accomplished. But I fear that too many young persons, instead of sanctifying these hours, allow them to be more polluted by sinful thoughts than any other portion of the day. Since, however, on these subjects a hint may be sufficient for those who are well disposed, I will now proceed to my story.”

### *Theodosia; or, The Will controlled.*

On the western banks of the Rhone there is a beautiful chain of mountains called the Cevennes, whose towering heights in some places seem to touch the clouds, while at others they are intersected with deep valleys, whose shadowy horrors are deepened by groves of chesnut, laurustinus, and evergreen oaks.

At the foot of one of these mountains, and more than half embosomed in a thick wood, there has stood, for some ages past, a superb chateau which was formerly the chief seat of the Counts of L——, one of the most noble families of France. This family, the initials of whose name have only reached us, as appears from record, stood high in favour at court ; and on this account its representatives resided much in the capital, being in the habit of leaving their estates almost entirely under the care of an intendent or steward. This superintendent did not reside in the chateau itself, but in a farmhouse not a quarter of a mile from it ; and whereas the chateau was situated on a gentle elevation, the farmhouse was placed in a deep valley, where a brook tumbling from the mountains poured its crystal stream over a pebbled channel.

Those who have travelled on the Continent may have seen many a sample of architecture not unlike that which this farm-house presented, and which indeed bore a near resemblance to such as were half a century ago very frequently to be met with in England. But as the fashions of this world speedily pass away, few such are now to be found, excepting in those remote situations to which modern taste has not yet extended its renovating influence.

It was a large black-timbered mansion, extending round a court, irregularly built and uncouthly adorned with grotesque and frowning figures carved in wood ; its high roof and turreted corners carrying the imagination back to those elder times, when even the dwellings of royalty were but clumsily ornamented.

The court of this mansion was well stored with all manner of poultry ; and thither large flocks of sheep and herds of cows were brought at night from their mountain pastures, to be there protected from the wolves with which the neighbouring forests were known to abound.

At the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV. at which period my narrative commences, the chateau was inhabited by Reginald Pierre, Count of L—— ; who, having spent his youth at court, had retired in his old age to his estates, where he married a very young woman in hopes of living to see an heir to his possessions and honours.

At the same time the stewardship was occupied by a respectable man, named Basil, who had been some years married to a daughter of one of the pastors of the Waldenses, and saw himself the happy father of four fine boys, whom their mother, a truly pious and excellent woman, was training up in the fear and nurture of the Lord. Basil, by associating with the Waldenses, had been led to renounce the popish religion, and to adopt the tenets of these holy people ; and as his renunciation of popery was publicly known, it failed not to produce him many enemies. Nevertheless, his upright conduct as a steward, and his kindness to the poor, had rendered him so necessary to his lord, and so much beloved by those who depended upon him, that his enemies had not the power to injure him on account of his religion.

When the old Count de L—— had been married a few months, hopes were given him that his lady would soon

present him with what he so anxiously desired, namely, a son to inherit his estates and titles, and thus prevent their descending to a distant branch of the family. With these hopes, so soothing to his pride, he comforted himself till the time of the child's birth, when, unfortunately, instead of a son, it proved to be a daughter.

The count was greatly disappointed; but the people about him consoled him by remarking, that as his wife was young she might have many more children, and that no doubt he would soon have the pleasure of embracing an heir to his estates and honours.

In this manner they reconciled the count to his disappointment; and that so effectually, as very tenderly to attach him to his little daughter, to whom he gave the name of Eleanor.

When this little girl was somewhat more than one year of age, it was announced to the count that he might shortly expect the birth of a second child. This he persuaded himself would prove a son; and in this belief, as the time of the birth of the child approached, he actually made preparations for a public rejoicing throughout his domains. But, alas, the long expected period, when it arrived, did not bring the happiness so ardently looked for. The child was born, and proved to be a girl; and a few hours after the birth of this unwelcome infant, the eyes of its mother were closed in the sleep of death.

When this double disaster reached the ears of the unhappy husband, he shut himself up in his closet, uttering the exclamations of a frantic man; nor could he be prevailed upon to give any orders either respecting the unfortunate infant or the remains of the mother. He had not been in the habit of making God his friend: his Saviour had not been the companion of his solitary hours; he could not say of him, *This is my beloved, and this is my friend.* (Cant. v. 16.) Consequently on this occasion he found himself deprived of hope; without refuge and without support. O, my readers, if you have not already done so, lose no time in acquainting yourselves with God, who is the Saviour of all that trust in him. Make him your friend and your counsellor, the guide of your steps, and the inseparable companion of your way. *By night on thy bed seek him as one whom thy soul loveth: seek him though you find him not immediately.* (Cant. iii. 1.)

*He is the friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*  
(Prov. xviii. 24.)

While the poor count remained shut up in his closet a prey to despair, the greatest confusion reigned in the chateau; where no one would presume to take upon himself the responsibility of ordering what was to be done.

Basil was shortly sent for; but it so happened, that his assistance could not be procured before the lapse of several hours. For it had been so ordered by the Almighty, that, a few days before these events took place at the chateau, Blanche, the wife of Basil, had brought him a little daughter who lived only two days; during which time she had been admitted into the visible Church of Christ, having received the sign and seal of baptism from her pious grandfather, the pastor of whom I before spoke. Basil, with his two elder sons, was at this very time engaged in committing his infant to the dust from which she came: *for dust we are, and unto dust we must return.* Therefore, when the servants at the chateau sent in haste for Basil, he was not to be found at home; and several hours must necessarily pass before he could return from the burying-place of the Waldenses among the mountains, to which he had carried his infant.

In the mean time, the sad news of what had happened at the chateau was carried to Blanche; who was then lying in her bed lamenting the loss of her baby. Yet was her grief chastened by Christian principles and sweetened by that hope which bereaved parents who have given up their children in faith are allowed to entertain, that in the last day they shall again behold their beloved little ones; *for they know whom they have believed, and are persuaded that he is able to keep that which they have committed unto him against the last day.* (2 Tim. i. 12.)

Blanche was much affected by the sad tidings from the chateau, and eagerly asked after the baby—whether it looked well—whether it would take food—with a thousand other questions which none but those who have the feelings of a tender mother would think of asking. But receiving little satisfaction, she became silent, and lay pondering a scheme in her mind which she did not impart to any one till her husband's return.

As soon as Basil came in, he hastened to his wife's room to speak some word of comfort to her, which his kind heart had suggested to him by the way—and this he was anxious to do before he went to the chateau.

"O, Basil!" she said, as soon as he came into the room, lifting herself in her bed and clasping her hands, "Basil, my beloved husband, do for me one favour; entreat for me, supplicate for me, that I may be allowed to nurse the unhappy baby of the chateau!"

"My dear, your health!" said Basil, in a voice which indicated that he was going to expostulate.

"If I am dear to you," said she, interrupting him, "if I am dear to you, bring me the baby: promise me that you will."

Basil smiled; but it was a smile in which a strong feeling of sorrow and pity was the prevailing expression. "Make yourself easy," he said, "and I will do for you all that is possible in this matter."

Basil went up to the chateau. He found every thing in confusion: no orders given about the funeral, nor any preparations made for it; while the infant, for whom no one appeared to care, although dressed superbly, seemed to be calmly delivered up to death by its unfeeling attendants. For it refused to eat such food as was prepared for it: and no one had proposed to procure it a nurse, from whom it might receive that kind of food which is natural to infants, and always instinctively desired by them.

In the mean time, no one had dared to approach the count, who still remained shut up in his closet. Basil adventured to knock at the door, and after much solicitation procured admittance. There he received authority to order and arrange the funeral of the poor countess, and to do what he pleased with the infant, whom the count expressed a wish never to behold. Although Basil was extremely impatient to set the mind of his wife at ease with respect to the infant, and to give certain necessary orders in the chateau, yet he could not, as a Christian, allow this opportunity to pass of speaking some word, in season or out of season, to his lord on the subject of religion; entreating him at the same time to look upward for comfort..

What effect his exhortations might have upon the

count, Basil could form no opinion. However, he considered that he had done his duty in this matter, and hoped that he should be enabled to follow up this pious work by frequent and earnest prayer in behalf of his lord.

When Basil had given such orders as he thought immediately necessary at the chateau, which he did with as much dispatch as possible, he took the infant from the arms of its hireling attendants, and, wrapping it up in his own mantle, carried it carefully down to his house, looking frequently by the way to observe whether it breathed, as he had been led to think that it held its life on an exceedingly precarious tenure. On arriving at his own door, his heart beat with joy to think of the pleasure he was going to afford his wife. He went softly up to her room, and, gently opening the door, stood by her bedside with the babe in his arms. She gave a piercing cry of joy when she perceived what he had brought wrapped in his mantle, and, raising herself in her bed, received the noble but unfortunate infant to her maternal bosom with emotions which may be more easily conceived than described. These are the feelings which make women truly lovely; wherein self is wholly disregarded, while the heart is drawn out to the orphan, the fatherless, and the helpless. On such occasions beauty becomes tenfold more beautiful, and even the most ordinary features acquire an inexpressible loveliness.

It was a matter of no consideration with Blanche and Basil how they were to be rewarded for their intended care of the infant; but all their anxiety seemed to be, whether with their utmost attention it might have a chance of living and doing well. While they were eagerly hanging over it, the child opened its little eyes, and uttered a faint cry. The first thing which Blanche did, was to disencumber it of its superb dress and those tight bandages with which it was swathed and bound; after which she put on it the light dress prepared for her own poor infant. It seemed to be instantly relieved, and very soon had established itself in great comfort and apparent high enjoyment in all the privileges which Blanche's own child would have possessed had it lived. Several times during the evening it took its nourishment, and slept comfortably in the intervals on the bosom of its new mother; while the whole heart of Blanche was lifted up in grati-

tude for the happiness she now enjoyed, as well as in earnest prayer for the divine blessing on her adopted baby.

Basil now returned, much relieved in mind, to the chateau, where he endeavoured to arrange every thing according to the wishes of the count. The remains of the countess were committed to the earth with great magnificence—and before many weeks had passed away, Basil had the same duties to perform for the poor count himself, who died a victim to excessive grief. The count left behind him a will, in which he commended his elder daughter to the care of the next heir, who was a married man and had several sons; requesting that she might be brought up in the family, educated with care, that is, with attention to the acquirement of elegant manners and accomplishments, and that, when of proper age, she might be given in marriage to the son of her guardian. He also left in the hand of trustees, a large sum of money, which was to be paid as her dowry on the day of her marriage. He likewise requested that his second daughter, of whom he spoke in his will as of one born under evil auspices, might be left in the family of Basil till the marriage of her sister, and then placed in a convent for life. In case of the death of her sister, he however hinted, that he hoped his heir would receive this his second child into the chateau in her sister's place, and make her his daughter-in-law; under which circumstances she was to receive the dowry intended for her sister. He moreover desired in his will, that she should be called Theodosia, after her mother; and that a yearly consideration should be made to Basil and his wife for their care of her till she should remove to the convent: but he left Theodosia no other fortune except a small sum, which was to be given to the convent of her choice.

These were the most important particulars contained in the count's will. But it seemed that in these arrangements the old gentleman had never taken it into consideration that Basil and his wife were heretics, and that Theodosia would consequently be brought up by them in their own way of thinking; a circumstance undoubtedly calculated to prevent her entering into a catholic convent. But the count being a freethinker, a description of men even at that time abounding in France, he consi-

dered all religious controversies as absurd; every denomination of Christians as equally right or equally wrong; and religion itself important only as it affected the well-being of states. As to any further consequences of religion, he, like *Gallio, cared for none of these things.* (Acts xviii. 17.)

The new count arrived at the chateau in time to be present at the funeral of his predecessor, to whose memory he paid all imaginable outward respect, professing his intention to execute precisely every article of his last will. He took Eleanor into his family, to be educated as the destined bride of his son and heir. He caused Theodosia to be christened with pomp, and then delivered her again with a handsome present to Blanche. After which, having arranged and settled every thing at the chateau, he returned to Paris, where his lady and children resided; leaving the charge of his estates to Basil, with whose fidelity he was well acquainted. I must not forget to say that he took the little Eleanor with him.

This great revolution having taken place in the noble family of L——, every thing was restored to quiet again in the course of a few weeks. And now the happy Blanche found herself in tranquil possession of her little nursling. From day to day she watched the growth of the lovely baby. Within a month after its birth, under the tender care of Blanche, its limbs grew plump and round, and its skin became of a milk-white fairness. In the second month, it could hold its head almost erect; its features at the same time assuming a form that promised a more than ordinary degree of loveliness. In another month, it began to know its adopted mother, and often, when taking its nourishment, would leave off to smile at her, and lift its hand to her mouth. From day to day its infantine beauties continued to open and expand, while a thousand sweet endearing ways made it the little darling of the whole family; but especially of its foster-mother, whose feelings towards it were of a peculiar nature which baffles all description. Thus, as this little creature grew in stature, she became more and more engaging to those about her; and Blanche especially found that her affection for the child was of such a description as might render it productive of unhappiness to both parties: she therefore made it a matter of

continual prayer, that she might be enabled to give her an education in all things conformable to the pleasure of God, and such as might render her early sojourn in that house not a misfortune but a blessing.

Blanche herself had enjoyed many advantages of education beyond what the wife of a man in Basil's situation could be supposed to have possessed. She was the only child of her father, who was a widower; and he being a man of considerable learning, and living in great retirement, had found a peculiar pleasure in instructing his daughter: besides which, she had spent some years with a lady of high rank, of the reformed Church, who had withdrawn from the world in order to enjoy religious retirement; and who, having taken a particular fancy to Blanche, had spent much time in giving her such instructions as literary fathers are not calculated to furnish. Blanche was therefore in every point more capable of educating Theodosia, than the world in general would have supposed: but though this afforded her a real gratification, it gave rise to no self-confidence, being fully persuaded that the work of educating an immortal soul for eternity, was not only infinitely above all her own ability, but above that of every human creature. She had been taught by her pious father to know, that between the work proposed, and the best means which can be used by the most judicious teacher for effecting it, there is a mighty chasm that cannot be filled up by all the exertions which human skill or affection can make. At the same time she had been taught, that while this reflection should humble the vain instructor, and so prevent all reliance upon his own qualifications; it ought also to yield that man sweet consolation, who looks continually for help from above, and who, knowing his own insufficiency, rests fully assured that a faithful God will complete the work which he knows to be beyond the best abilities of his most favoured agents. To work with God, and according to his will, in the business of education, was therefore what Blanche supposed to be the sum of human wisdom in so important a concern. Accordingly, she made it her prayer in the management of all her children, that she might have wisdom to commence her labours in the same manner as the Father of spirits for the most part begins his deal-

ings with such of his creatures as he designs to bring effectually to himself. A little observation, and a little reflection, with God's blessing, soon brought Blanche to see where the divine operations commonly commence in the restoration of sinful man, and also where the work of human instruction may be advantageously resorted to.

There is a certain principle, which, whether called original sin, the lust of the flesh, pride, selfishness, or by what other name you please, reigns alike in the hearts of all human beings by nature—holding each individual in entire subjection, leading him to make self his idol, alienating him from God, and rendering him callous to the feelings of others. This evil principle, however concealed or modified, however palliated to the ear by refined and plausible sentiments, or to the eye by beauty, elegance, and fashion, is every where the same baneful, poisonous, destructive, and horrible propensity; and though not breaking out so disgustingly in every distinct individual, is yet in all the unconverted children of Adam, before that God “to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid,” equally deserving of everlasting death, or eternal banishment from the divine presence. This principle, therefore, is what parents should wage war against in their children; and it was with this that Blanche began, not only in the management of her own little boys, but also in the case of her noble and darling nursling. Accordingly, all the earliest lessons to which Theodosia's attention was called, tended to the abasement of self, and the exaltation of God. With this two-fold end in prospect, she exhibited to the children of her charge no false or deceitful view of things; but continually and simply stated to them the many sad circumstances attendant on man's natural condition in the world, to wit, his depraved soul; his stubborn will; his perverted taste; the grossness of his desires; his delight in that which is low and vile; his folly; his vain and filthy thoughts; together with his love and preference of self: the innumerable loathsome diseases to which he is subject; his want even of outward comeliness during the greater part of the years of his life; his subjection to death; the corruption of his body in the grave; his becoming food for

worms—all these things at different times she took occasion to point out to her little pupils, very generally insisting upon the necessity of overcoming self, as the great enemy of every man, as that which principally keeps him back from God, and which without the divine assistance can never be wholly subdued. And as she endeavoured to lower self in the minds of her children, she strove likewise to exalt the Creator in their ideas, dwelling continually on the love of God, as shewn forth in the mighty work of man's salvation. Neither was it only by precept that Blanche endeavoured to subdue every selfish principle in her children: she led them also by example to innumerable little acts of self-denial by which they might benefit others. Moreover, she taught them to reject praise as not belonging to *them*, but as due only to God; a kind of incense to which no creature has any title, all the good we possess being the property of God.

Thus on the broad basis of humility and self-denial did Blanche begin and carry on the education of her beloved Theodosia. She taught her, that it was an actual sin to occupy either her time or her talents with a view to self-gratification; and that every action and thought of this kind would, to say the least, procure neither profit nor pleasure in the end. At the same time, she endeavoured to make her laborious in her exertions for the poor, preparing and carrying to them coats and garments, visiting and reading to the sick, and catechising such of the neighbouring little ones as were allowed by their parents and the priests to hear the pure doctrines of the reformed Church, in which Blanche of course educated her noble pupil.

Theodosia was also taught to read such ancient religious books as were approved by the father of Blanche; on which account, as those books were for the most part written in Latin it became necessary that she should study that language. Blanche also taught her to play upon the lute, and to accompany it with her voice in singing such hymns as were judged accordant to true religion. This the young lady accomplished in an exceeding sweet and simple manner, having a fine voice, and no desire to set forth her own excellencies while singing the praises of her Creator. She also assisted her

adopted mother in many little household businesses. In this manner passed the happy early days of Theodosia, who grew up exceedingly lovely in her outward appearance; which loveliness was greatly enhanced by the simplicity of her manners, and that absence of selfishness which was observable in her deportment. Her four brothers, as she called them, loved her as a very dear sister; while Basil and Blanche felt for her as for the most beloved of daughters.

When Theodosia was twelve years of age, a particular apartment, and that the most convenient in the house, was appropriated to her by her kind friends. It was a large upper room, with an oriel window at one end, which being raised several steps, and projecting a considerable way from the wall of the house, commanded a view on one side a considerable way up the dingle or dell in which the building stood, together with the brook making its way along its pebbled bed, till, winding in part round the house, it disappeared under a rude bridge at a little distance. On the other side of this window, the principal features which presented themselves to the eye, were a path cut in the wood, which at the distance of half a quarter of a mile was terminated by an old gateway of the chateau, and one or two towers, which arose in gloomy majesty above the trees. In this apartment, Theodosia's little bed was placed in a recess; which during the day time was closed up by folding-doors of carved wood, rendered almost black by time: and here also were her book-shelves, her materials for needle-work and writing, with sundry curious old chests, in which were laid up coats and garments prepared for the poor. In the oriel window of this room, Blanche and Theodosia spent most of their summer afternoons, sometimes accompanied by an old servant who had assisted the wife of Basil in bringing up her children, and who had finished her labours of this kind by attending on the little Theodosia. And sometimes their party was augmented by Blanche's eldest son, who was destined to succeed his grandfather in the care of his little flock among the mountains, and who therefore was devoted to the study of divinity; while his younger brothers were occupied with their father in such rural employments as were adapted to their several ages. Thus the oriel was

the daily scene of industry, charity, and holy instruction; for it was the great pleasure of the younger Basil, to impart the knowledge he acquired to his beloved sister Theodosia: and to this end, while she was employed with her needle, he read aloud such books as his grandfather had recommended to his study, commenting as he went along, and pointing out those passages which he thought most worthy of her attention.

It was the continual care of Blanche to draw Theodosia from herself, and from selfish cares of every kind, leading her to be continually occupied with the feelings, the interests, and the welfare of others. She taught Theodosia, and her adopted brother confirmed his pious mother's instructions, that the end of man here on earth, and of all that he is made to suffer by a kind Providence, is in order to bring his will into a strict conformity to the will of God.

“When we are enabled to say, with our beloved Saviour,” remarked the pious Blanche, “*Thy will, O Lord, not mine be done*, then are we in the way to be happy both in life and in death. But while we still eagerly desire self-indulgence of any kind, making self the subject of our private contemplation or our public discourse, and while our own wills and desires outrun the permission of God, we are to a certain degree in an unconverted state, and must expect, if we are to be finally saved, that he will still further empty us of self, and still more deeply abase us in our own sight.

She also taught Theodosia how this work of self-humiliation, or mortification of sin, must be carried on; not by any human means, (although it must be accompanied by outward acts of self-denial,) but by the power of the Spirit of God, through which only we can be enabled to subdue our natural evil inclinations. All other means, she remarked, had, by long experience, proved themselves utterly ineffectual; and must, of necessity, do so, since outward acts of mortification, however severe, could hardly be considered in any other light than that of so many incentives to self-confidence and spiritual pride, tending rather to increase than to diminish the evil propensities of our nature.

Neither the pious instructions nor the lovely Christian example of Blanche were lost upon the young Theodo-

sia; but, being accompanied by the blessing of God, they produced in her the fairest fruits, insomuch that as she grew in stature she grew in favour both with God and with such of her fellow-creatures as were permitted to associate with her. And in this manner passed her life till she had attained her sixteenth year, at which time those principles which her parents by adoption had endeavoured to inculcate with such unremitting labour, were brought to an unexpected test.

From the period that the present count had come into possession of the estates of L—— till this time, he had not once visited his chateau, having resided in Paris with his whole family, of which Theodosia's sister continually formed a part: but now he sent Basil orders to have every thing prepared for the reception of his family at the chateau, where in a few weeks he arrived with a numerous train of attendants.

It was evening when the count and his family reached the chateau, whither Basil immediately went up to pay his duty to his lord.

The family were at supper in the hall, which was superbly lighted up with chandeliers sent purposely from Paris, when the old steward was admitted.

He was received by the noble party in a manner due to his hoary hairs and long services, and made to sit down, while the count held him in conversation for the space of half an hour. During this time Basil had an opportunity of looking round him and examining the countenances of the children of his lord, who were now fully grown up; as well as of Eleanor, the daughter of his former master and sister of his adopted child.

Basil, however, saw nothing in these young people which in his opinion could render them comparable to Theodosia. Eleanor somewhat resembled her sister in respect of form and features; but her manner was bold and haughty, and the expression of her countenance harsh and self-confident. The eldest son of the count, who next excited the interest of Basil, though still very young, looked already like a man of the world, and had the air of one whose youthful bloom was prematurely impaired by late hours and corrupt habits.

When Eleanor understood who Basil was, she coolly and formally enquired after her sister; and the countess

desired Basil to bring her up to the chateau the next day ; a request which caused the heart of the old man to sink within him, under an apprehension that this introduction into worldly society would prove only the beginning of sorrows to his dear Theodosia.

Before he left the chateau, a hint was privately given him by the count, that the marriage between his eldest son and the lady Eleanor was to be celebrated at the chateau during the summer, in consequence of which he was charged with some preparations necessary to be previously made.

On Basil's return to his house, Theodosia eagerly asked him many questions about her sister, to which Basil answered, "I am to take you to see her to-morrow, and I hope you will find her worthy of your regard."

When Blanche heard that Theodosia was to go to the chateau, although she understood it was only for a few hours' visit, she felt the same sad *presentiments* which her husband had felt before. However, she did not express her fears to any one ; but, retiring to pray, she implored her heavenly Father, who had hitherto so tenderly watched over her adopted child, to keep her now in the hour of temptation. (Rev. iii. 10.)

At the appointed time the next day, Theodosia was led by Basil, in a neat yet simple dress, to the chateau ; where, after being presented to the count and countess, she was introduced to her sister and all the sons and daughters of the count.

The count and countess received her with cold politeness ; Eleanor affected an appearance of kindness, which did but ill conceal her real want of regard, or even the habitual contempt she entertained for her sister, whom she considered as greatly her inferior, having been brought up, as she had been led to suppose, in the manner of a mere rustic.

Every one, whatever they might express, was struck with the appearance of Theodosia. They saw elegance where they expected to meet with rusticity, and observed a dignified kind of composure where they looked for nothing but awkward bashfulness. The young ladies who had been brought up in Paris, as they supposed, in the first style, saw themselves excelled, without being able to comprehend the possibility of such a thing. They

felt mortified, and yet were ashamed to confess to themselves that they were so. They could have no idea what it was which gave to Theodosia's manner a degree of excellence which they could not but feel, however loath they might be to commend or even to acknowledge it. They did not know that where there is humility in a character—unfeigned humility, without any wish to force self into notice, but a simple Christian desire of paying to all men the honour due to them—that character will, generally speaking, be a dignified one, and the general deportment of the individual will be decent, calm, and courteous. If we add to this quality of humility, a mind cultivated by meditation on choice subjects, and habitually rejecting impure and low thoughts, it will exalt the character to a still higher standard; elegance and intelligence will be added to decency, calmness, and courtesy: and where we have all these, we have a perfect gentlewoman—such as the world cannot make—such as fashion cannot mimic—such as no art can attain. The maker of artificial flowers may acquire sufficient perfection to please the eye of a superficial observer; but his roses and lilies will not bear examination; they will neither perfume the surrounding air, nor attract the bee by their imitative beauties. But the works of the Almighty, whether he display his skill in forming a flower of the desert, or whether he put forth his power under a sublimer shape, in forming anew the heart of some favoured individual of our depraved race, do invariably exhibit a perfection which malice itself is constrained to acknowledge, and which no human art can successfully counterfeit.

But to return to my story. Theodosia was invited to remain till evening at the chateau, to partake of the superb supper, and to be present at the evening amusements, which consisted of many pastimes of which she had hitherto formed little idea; namely, dancing, masking, and games of chance: for there was a large assemblage at the chateau of ladies and gentlemen, independent of the family of the count. Music also was to make a part of the entertainment; not such music as Theodosia had been used to hear, but light songs and gay airs, which, for the moment, may, indeed, raise the spirits and excite the passions, but which commonly leave them in a state of listlessness and exhaustion.

The countess caused Theodosia to be dressed in one of her sister's superb robes, in order that the family pride might not be hurt by the simplicity of her habiliments; and the female servants who were employed to assist her in putting on these ornaments, did not fail to congratulate her upon her improved appearance. After which, when she was brought into company, she was much noticed by those who had no temptation to envy her; particularly by the eldest son of the count, who was not long in discovering which of the two sisters was to be preferred, neither did he attempt to hide from any one the sudden preference which he had conceived.

The effect of all this upon the mind of Theodosia, was far from a desirable one: yet such as it was I shall endeavour to describe it, that it may hold out a lesson to other young persons, and induce them, if they love their own peace, or if they desire the salvation of their souls, to shun those scenes where all that is evil and selfish in our nature is excited, and to seek such situations in life as tend to allay the passions, and to throw self into the background. It must, however, be remarked, that Theodosia had not sought her present trials, but was unexpectedly exposed to them; and they were, perhaps, ordained by Providence, for the purpose of giving her an humbling view of herself, in order more effectually to lower her in her own opinion, to control her will, and to prepare her for that state of happiness upon which she was soon to enter.

The first effect which these new scenes produced upon Theodosia, was to throw her mind into a kind of tumult, which in a slight degree impaired that beautiful composure of which I have just spoken. In this tumult new ideas mingled with old ones, and new sensations opposed ancient habits. Her strongest feelings, for a time, were those of curiosity and wonder, and these were blended with displeasure at many things which she saw, and which she knew to be wrong. At length, flattery producing its usual effect, led her to think of herself, and to enquire what figure she herself made in the motley and gay group around her. Self-love soon, however, led her to make a discovery which at the time was far from disagreeable to her, namely, that she was an object of admiration to some and of envy to others: and now vanity

obtained an increasing influence over her from one moment to another. Nevertheless as she yielded to the temptation her conscience stung her, while the thought of her past humble and happy life became uneasy to her. It may be asked, Could one day—a few hours only—undo so effectually the work of so many years? Then wherefore do pious parents rise up early, and late take rest, in order to advance the spiritual good of their children? I answer, the work of a pious education may for a time be marred, but it is not easily destroyed: if blessed of God, it can never be destroyed. Though that which is built on the rock Christ may be destroyed to the foundation, yet the foundation will stand for ever. And though not one stone be left upon another, of the most beautiful edifice which education can form, but all may appear to be subverted by the malice of Satan, yet, in three days can Christ build it up again. (John ii. 19.) *For brass I will bring gold, and for iron silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron. The sun shall be no more thy light by day, nor the moon by night: but the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.* (Isaiah lx. 17, 19, 20.)

In this manner the evening passed away at the chateau till, at a late hour, the company dispersed; and Theodosia was not sorry to receive an invitation for the following day. Blanche was too penetrating, and understood human nature too well, not to perceive the injury which this intercourse with the count's family was effecting on the mind of Theodosia. She had, however, no power to prevent this intercourse, because these were Theodosia's natural friends and protectors; and she knew not, had it been in her power, how far it would have been right to have thrown any obstacle in the way of her associating with her sister. She therefore did what she could: she prayed continually for her beloved child, that her heavenly Father would so order matters that every thing might work together for her good; and, in addition to this, she took every opportunity of cautioning Theodosia against the temptations with which she was surrounded.

Nearly two months had passed away since the arrival of the count's family, and during this time Theodosia had almost daily spent her evenings at the chateau. In

this interval, though apparently more gay than usual, Theodosia had known more real sorrow than her whole life before could have summed up. She had been neglected and treated haughtily by her sister, whose jealousy and envy had now assumed something of a decided form; Eleanor having discovered for some time past the preference given to her sister by her intended husband.

Theodosia also, besides the unkindness of her sister, had begun to form a taste for gay and high life, which, contending with her love to Blanche and the humble family of Basil, formed a kind of conflict in her mind, and opposition of desires, which was equally new and painful to her. Her conscience, also, was wounded: she knew that which was right, while she delighted in that which was wrong. She ceased to have sweet thoughts of her God and her Saviour. She meditated no more on him who had died for her, and who had once been inexpressibly endeared to her thoughts. The companion of her solitary hours, the object of her pure and holy love from early infancy, was now estranged from her; she had allowed Him to depart; He had withdrawn himself, and was gone: yet not so far gone, but he still watched tenderly over her, and had prepared for her a way of escape which she could not perceive; neither was it such a one as she would have taken had the choice been left to her.

The time was now approaching, when the eldest son of the count was expected to take the wife for whom he had been destined from his youth. Eleanor's dowry had been accumulating from her infancy, and the old count was impatient to secure this property to his family. The young man had for several weeks past manifested some reluctance to the proposed marriage; and when his father took an opportunity of telling him that it was his intention to have it speedily solemnized, he confessed that he had conceived a disgust at the insolent and imperious carriage of Eleanor, and that if he must take a wife, he should infinitely prefer Theodosia. His father was extremely enraged at this confession. However, dissembling the excess of his anger, he told his son that he would give him a few weeks to consider of what he had been saying; in the mean time, that, as he had some business of particular consequence to be

transacted in Paris, he would send him thither, hoping, that on his return he would be found more willing to comply with the will of his parents.

The young count, who expected that his father would be very angry with him, and who feared that he should be immediately compelled to marry Eleanor, was very glad of this delay; and undertook to go immediately whither his father wished to send him, requiring only one day to prepare for his journey. In the mean time, he intended, if possible, to get a sight of Theodosia, and perhaps to tell her what had passed. But the old count foreseeing this, had sent to Basil, desiring him to keep her confined in her own room, till his son should have left the country.

Theodosia was preparing as usual to go to the chateau, when this order arrived. Basil and Blanche were much puzzled to conjecture what this message could mean. However Blanche, not to distress Theodosia more than was necessary, undertook to keep her in her apartment without letting her know that it was the will of the count. She therefore went up to her, and informed her that she could not go to the chateau that evening. "Something has happened, my dear child," she said, "which will prevent the countess and your sister from seeing you to-day. You may therefore lay aside your preparations, and we will spend the evening together."

Theodosia coloured, and looked mortified at these words of Blanche, and at length actually burst into tears. These tears hurt and affected Blanche exceedingly. She was arranging the little table and the needle-work in the oriel window, in the manner she used to do when they spent their happy evenings together; when ceasing her preparations, and turning to Theodosia, she said, "O my Theodosia! my child! what can have thus changed the heart of my beloved one in so extraordinary a manner, that she cannot submit, without tears, to spend one evening with her adopted mother?"

These words struck like a dagger to the heart of Theodosia, who, falling on her knees before Blanche, and clasping her arms around her, poured forth many strong expressions of remorse, shame, and grief.

"I hope," said Blanche, much alarmed, and putting

together the agonies of Theodosia with the message sent by the count, "that you have done nothing very wrong, very sinful, very disgraceful, with which I am not acquainted. Speak in a moment, tell me what you have done."

Theodosia looked wildly about her, "I do not know," she said, "I cannot tell, I hope and trust that I have been kept from open and shameful sin; but my whole heart appears changed, I am strangely altered, and am no more worthy to be called your child."

Their conversation was here interrupted by the voice of Basil, calling loudly to his wife, and begging her to come down in haste. Blanche, being full of apprehension, hastily left Theodosia, and, not forgetting to lock the door of her room, ran down stairs.

And now Theodosia, who did not perceive that she was locked in her room, was left alone to her own reflections, which were of an exceeding sad and painful nature; yet so confused were her thoughts that she could employ them to no profitable purpose, neither could she have given any account of her mental exercises for nearly two hours—during which she sat before the open window with her eyes fixed on the towers of the chateau rising above the woods, which were the objects that immediately presented themselves to her view.

While she remained alone it became dark, so that the gothic turrets were only visible by the outline which they formed on the horizon.

At length the hour arrived when the great hall was commonly lighted up; and immediately the splendid lamps were seen glimmering from the windows through the dark foliage of the surrounding trees, a horn at the same time giving the signal that the family were going to their evening meal; and shortly after followed the sound of music, when Theodosia could faintly distinguish the various tunes which she had so often heard during the banquet.

Scenes of past pleasure now arising before her remembrance, she broke out into a new paroxysm of grief—and while she was thus giving way to her fancied sorrows, Blanche returned. She held a light in her hand, and her face was pale as death. She set the candle on the table, saying in a voice of assumed

composure, “ Theodosia, you would do well to go to bed.”

Theodosia hastily wiped away her tears, of which she was truly ashamed ; and, turning to look at Blanche, she was suddenly terrified at the expression of her countenance.

“ Go, my dear,” repeated Blanche, “ go to bed, and try to take some rest.”

“ Oh my mother,” replied Theodosia, “ how can I take rest when you look as you now do ! What has happened ? O tell me why do you look so indescribably wretched ? ”

Blanche burst into tears. “ I would,” she said, “ have concealed this affliction from you till the morning, if possible, that I might thus have procured for you one more peaceful night’s repose in the house of your adopted parents ; but I cannot do it. It is best perhaps that you should know all this night, and thus more time will be given you for bringing your mind into a state of submission. To-morrow, my Theodosia, my child, you must leave us ; to-morrow,—yes, to-morrow you are to be placed in a convent.”—Blanche could say no more, but clasping her hands and lifting up her eyes to heaven, “ Thy will, O God,” she added, “ Thy will be done.” So saying, she sunk almost fainting into a chair.

Theodosia stood for some moments looking at Blanche, like one stupid. At length, as if recollecting herself, she exclaimed, “ It is all right, beloved mother ! I see at once that it is all right. I have deserved this—my poor inconstant heart required it. O my heavenly Father, without this I should perhaps have been lost ; for ever lost ; my soul would have been lost. Then kneeling down and lifting up her hands and eyes streaming with tears, “ O heavenly Father,” she said, “ grant me grace to submit to this trial as a Christian should do.”

Blanche and Theodosia spent the whole night in conversation, mutually trying to reconcile themselves to the decree of the count, who had signified his intention of placing Theodosia in a convent ; and as he was her guardian, his authority also being strengthened by her father’s will, Basil and Blanche knew that there were no means of resisting his determination. Nevertheless, Theodosia, as not being a Roman Catholic, could never consent

to take the vows of a nun ; but this circumstance they well knew would aggravate rather than diminish her unhappiness in the convent, since, no doubt, every possible method would be taken to compel her to this step.

Towards the dawn of day, Theodosia, being thoroughly fatigued with weeping, fell into a short sleep ; from which awaking in about half an hour, she found herself alone, Blanche having gone out to make some preparations for her journey.

Theodosia was lying on a bed from which she could see the oriel, together with the table, chairs, and needle-work, which Blanche had arranged the last evening before the sad news arrived. Theodosia lifted herself up in her bed, and cried out in an agony of mind, as the events of the past day rushed on her remembrance, “ And was I so very wicked as to think it a misfortune to spend one evening with my beloved mother ? Could I indeed have such ungrateful thoughts ? Is it possible that my heart could have wandered so far from duty, and so far have lost all natural affection ? Never could I have believed myself to be so utterly vile ! But Thou hast brought my chastisement upon me, O Lord ; and left me nothing to say, but that I deserve this, and more also. Thy judgments are right, O Lord ; I feel them to be so. O give me grace to bear them with submission, and to become the better for them.”

I will not enter into a minute description of the sad parting between Blanche and Theodosia, nor attempt to paint the grief of Basil and his sons when they saw her forced away from them. Suffice it to say, that about the middle of the day, when the count trusted his eldest son was far enough off not to interfere with his measures, he sent a priest, with a certain number of his own servants, to convey Theodosia to a convent, situated about three leagues from the chateau, where she was put under the care of the lady abbess, who received orders to treat her with kindness, but at the same time to guard her with such strictness as to cut off all hope of effecting her escape.

It must not be supposed from this behaviour of the count that he disliked Theodosia, or preferred Eleanor to her ; for this was not the case : but he coveted the money which Eleanor was to receive at her marriage, and knew

that Theodosia had nothing. Thus he was led, by the love of money, to overlook those good qualities which would probably have made Theodosia an excellent wife for his son, and might have rendered her price far above rubies.

And now to follow poor Theodosia. She was received at the convent with civility, and taken into the parlour of the lady abbess, where she was assured that every thing should be done to render her happy, if she would endeavour to reconcile herself to her situation. Theodosia however felt that it would not be easy to reconcile herself to such a situation, separated as she now was from her beloved friends, and condemned to live with persons whose religion she had been taught to look upon with the highest disapprobation. Every thing she saw, filled her with horror. Wherever she turned her eyes, she beheld images of the Virgin and of the saints, to which the nuns as they passed paid such respect as was due only to Almighty God. This she considered as absolute idolatry, and what she never could participate in. Many other things she quickly saw and heard which were altogether contrary to the opinions she had imbibed. Nevertheless it pleased God, by this unexpected affliction which had come upon her, so to open her eyes to the evil of her late conduct, that feeling much abasement and self-condemnation on account of it, she presumed not harshly to censure the ignorance and folly which she saw around her, but rather felt that she who had of late so greatly sinned against light, was more culpable than those poor creatures, who had not been blessed, like herself, with a pious and enlightened education. She however firmly persisted, let the consequence be what it would, in refusing to join with the lady abbess and her nuns, in hearing mass or attending any other rite of their religion; upon which, the abbess, who wished to try the gentlest means of winning her over, and who besides had private reasons for not violently offending Basil and his wife, suffered her for a time to take her own way, only insisting that she should attend the family meals.

Theodosia, then, from the time she entered the convent, was left much to herself. A little apartment, or cell, was given to her, in which there was no furniture

but a bedstead covered with a hard mattress, a table, a chair, and a lamp. Here Theodosia spent many solitary hours ; and here she found the benefit of that little store of religious knowledge and holy instruction which had been given her, and which now returned with force to her mind. Here she spent much time in prayer, as well as in deep meditation on her late evil conduct ; and grace was given her to receive the present affliction as a proper and necessary chastisement, and indeed a light one when compared with the offences into which she had lately fallen. Her grief was at first bitter, and at times overwhelming ; and she frequently remembered with peculiar anguish that evening, when she had seen her beloved parent arranging the little table and chairs for their work, together with her own ungrateful conduct on the occasion. “ Oh ! my mother ! my mother ! ” she would then exclaim, “ what would I now give for one hour of your sweet society ! ” Thus the Almighty brings his wayward children frequently to long after and desire those things, which during the triumph of passion and selfishness they had rejected with disdain.

After a few weeks, by the blessing of God, the vehemence of Theodosia’s grief began to subside, while her will became from day to day more subdued to the will of her heavenly Father : and the first symptom of this blessed change was, that she found herself less occupied by her own proper feelings and sufferings, and more affectionately anxious for the peace of Blanche and Basil than for her own. Her heart was also drawn out more in prayer for the poor nuns, and for her sister, that God would have mercy upon them, and open their eyes to their eternal interests. And although she still refused to accommodate herself to that which she judged wrong in the religion of her companions, yet she shewed a willingness to meet them, and hold fellowship with them, where she could do so without offending her conscience. Her general manner became more courteous and gracious ; she desired to be allowed to assist them in their work, shewing a backwardness to give offence when it could possibly be avoided : and while she prayed that she might be enabled to say, “ Thy will, O God, in all respects be done,” she carefully watched and strove against the peculiar temptations which grow out of soli-

tude, and particularly the self-complacent indulgence of evil thoughts and vain imaginations, that prevailing sin into which so many of the children of Adam are continually falling. It was her constant supplication that she might have grace to overcome that love of self, through which thousands and tens of thousands have fallen down wounded, if not eternally lost. Theodosia had early been taught by her excellent instructress to know and fear this worst of enemies ; and now the Holy Spirit poured his blessing silently and abundantly upon the Christian instructions of the faithful Blanche.

In the mean time, the young count returned from Paris, and, after several violent altercations with his father, was led by an insatiable desire of money, which his dissipated habits rendered necessary to him, to give up Theodosia whom he loved, and to marry Eleanor, who was at least perfectly indifferent to him : after which, the count with his whole family returned to Paris, leaving the chateau and his surrounding estates under the care of Basil. Blanche had made several attempts to see Theodosia, but could never succeed ; neither could she succeed in getting a letter conveyed to her, although she had employed many means for that purpose : she was therefore obliged to content herself with offering up frequent and ardent prayers for the welfare of the child of her heart.

At length, when nearly a year had passed, and the anxious Blanche had begun to tremble at the measures which might be taken at the end of Theodosia's novitiate to compel her to take the veil, news was brought of the sudden death of the old count : shortly after which his son arrived at the chateau, unattended except by a few servants, for the purpose of inspecting his new possessions. Basil hastened to pay his duty to his young lord, and to receive his orders ; nor did he fail to avail himself of this opportunity, very earnestly to request that Theodosia might be allowed to leave the convent and return to his house. The young count instantly acknowledged that he had no right to retain her in the convent against her will, neither indeed had he the smallest desire to make her unhappy—so that the joyful Basil only waited the count's departure, in order immediately to effect the deliverance of his adopted child.

The will of Theodosia had been brought into an entire subjection to the will of her heavenly Father, before the arrival of Basil and Blanche at the convent : but as her mind attained a more heavenly frame and the inner man gained strength, the outer man had perceptibly decayed. Her health, though very gradually, had for some months been giving way ; though, as it appeared, not so much from any outward cause, as from some internal disorder which probably had been gaining strength, though secretly, for several years, and which would assuredly under any circumstances have terminated her life in youth.

Basil and Blanche were much affected when they perceived the change in her appearance : yet the pious Blanche, as she received her lovely pale Theodosia once again to her maternal bosom, drew even from her altered appearance a new cause of gratitude to God, in allowing her to be brought back to her beloved home, to be there assisted, and consoled, during the remainder of her days, rather than left to die among strangers.

The delight of finding herself once again in her happy home, which she now earnestly prayed that she might never more be compelled to leave ; of seeing herself surrounded by Blanche, by Basil, her old nurse, and her adopted brothers ; of sitting once again in the oriel window, and listening to those sweet hymns of praise which the little family every evening offered to God ; of hearing the pious conversation of the old pastor, the father of Blanche, and his grandson—all this for a time gave new life to Theodosia, and seemed to protract her days for a season. But after this first effect of joy had subsided, nature again languished, and it became evident to all that the time of her departure was at hand. Nevertheless the prospect was full of sweet hope to Theodosia herself, as well as of inexpressible comfort to Basil and his family, who perceiving in her a subdued frame of mind and a will conformed to that of God, could not but adore and praise the author of so glorious a work.

“ I thank thee, O God,” said Theodosia, some few hours before her death, “ for so inestimable a proof of thy favour towards me, in subduing in me, by thy Holy Spirit, that selfish nature which I inherited from my

birth, and which would assuredly have brought me to utter destruction, hadst not thou, O heavenly Father, interfered in my behalf, and plucked me as a brand from the burning." She then broke forth into the praises of redeeming love, giving glory to God, who had graciously removed the sting of death, and made her, through the Lord Jesus Christ, even more than conqueror over that king of terrors.

Before her last agonies, Theodosia took a tender leave of Basil and Blanche, with all the friends of her childhood; particularly testifying her love and gratitude to Blanche, and humbly requesting her to forgive all her want of duty and affection, especially on one occasion which she specified. She died a few hours afterwards, professing an entire renunciation of self, as an unclean and abominable thing, and an absolute dependence on the merits of Christ to procure her salvation.

The sorrow of Basil and Blanche for their dear child was not without its sweets; and their remembrance of her from year to year became more delightful to them, as their hopes of a happy meeting in another world grew more bright and less distant.

Eleanor and her husband arrived at the chateau a few hours before the remains of the lovely Theodosia were committed to the grave. Eleanor's reflections on the subject were far from agreeable; and, from that time, she never heard the name of Theodosia, without a feeling of remorse, which she found it impossible to suppress. Her marriage, as might have been expected, was not a happy one, since her motives for entering into it were selfish and ambitious, and such as could by no means be supposed to ensure a blessing.

The lady of the manor here ceased to read: when the young ladies, as usual, began to make their remarks on the history, having first thanked her for the pleasure they had received from the hearing of it. Miss Louisa said, "If no young person can be said to be in a right state, till, like Theodosia in the convent, they are enabled to cry out with their whole hearts, 'O Lord, thy will be done;' in the midst of every earthly privation throwing self into the back-ground,

and attending chiefly to other people's feelings—I fear that there are very few young people at all in a right state."

"It is not our business," replied the lady of the manor, "to enquire into the state of the world in general as to their private feelings; thank God, we have none to answer for but ourselves, and such persons as are in some measure under our influence. But of this we may be very certain, that the less we are occupied by our own private feelings, and the less we indulge self in every possible way, the more our minds will be prepared for the reception of true religion, and the more likely shall we be to obtain happiness in the present world as well as in that which is to come. It is the will of man rising up in opposition to that of God, and seeking continually its own gratification, which renders him miserable, and separates him from his Maker. These desires are those *sinful lusts of the flesh* which we have undertaken to renounce, and which must be subdued before we can enter the kingdom of God. But," added the lady of the manor, "our hours wear away, though I have not uttered half I have to say upon this subject. We must now, however, part for the present; and when we meet again, we will, if you please, renew the subject, which is, alas, a very copious one. I shall then endeavour to point out to you several ways in which these desires of the flesh commonly manifest themselves in what is called decent life, together with the many evils which might be avoided by a proper control early exercised over the will—that divine assistance being first earnestly sought which is so freely offered us in Scripture. I perhaps may also be able to find you another story somewhat applicable to the subject."

The whole company then thanked the lady of the manor for the trouble she took with them, and expressed a particular pleasure in hearing the stories she had to relate. The evening was as usual finished with prayer.

*A Prayer to be enabled to conform our Wills to that of God.*

"BLESSED and glorious Lord God Almighty, Crea-

tor of heaven and earth, our Father everlasting, our Saviour and our Friend, hearken, we beseech thee, to the prayers of thy poor creatures, who have hitherto lived under the dominion of sin, the slaves of our own lusts, and of various evil passions, which will assuredly bring us to everlasting destruction, unless thou, O Lord our God, wilt lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, and dispel the darkness of our minds. To thee, O God the Father, we look up, as to Him who loved us ere yet we entered into being, and planned our salvation ere yet the foundations of the world were laid. To thee, O God the Son, we apply, as to our brother in the flesh, whose infinite merits and precious death have procured for us the inestimable blessing of justification. And to thee, O God the Holy Ghost, we address our imperfect petitions, knowing that from thee proceed the incalculable privileges of regeneration and sanctification. Blessed and holy Lord God, make us, we beseech thee, new creatures; regenerate and sanctify us, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, give us power to contend with the corruptions of our vile nature, conform our wills in all respects to thine, and enable us to say on every occasion of trial, 'Thy will, O God, be done.' Teach us to consider self, and its inbred corruptions, as the enemy which we have reason above all others to dread, and assist us to detect its wiles, under however specious a form it may appear to act. Leave us not to ourselves, we earnestly entreat thee; leave us not with our worst of foes; neither take account of our past sins, nor of the countless number of our evil thoughts, our wayward tempers, and corrupt desires. Impute to us, we earnestly pray thee, that righteousness of Christ, which is without spot or stain of sin. Wash us in his blood, feed us with the bread of heaven, give us power to trample upon our lusts, renew and sanctify our polluted hearts, and enable us finally, triumphing over sin, to enter into everlasting glory. O blessed Lord God, hear the voice of our humble supplications, for the sake of him who shed his blood for us upon the cross, and render us acceptable to thyself, through the sanctifying and purifying power of thy blessed Spirit. And now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be all glo-

ry, and honour, and praise, henceforward, and for evermore. *Amen.*"

END OF VOL. I.















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